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YEAR Again enlarged April – May – June

The Countryman

IMPERIAL AGRICULTURAL BUREAUX PUSA
20. APR. 1982

1982 in the Country

by Eight Authorities

Cartoon by

Scott

by the Duke of Montrose

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Rural Experiences

1. Buying a Farm
2. Buying an Hotel
3. Buying a House

Poem by Sylvia Townsend Warner

[List of Contents, page 270

29769/36

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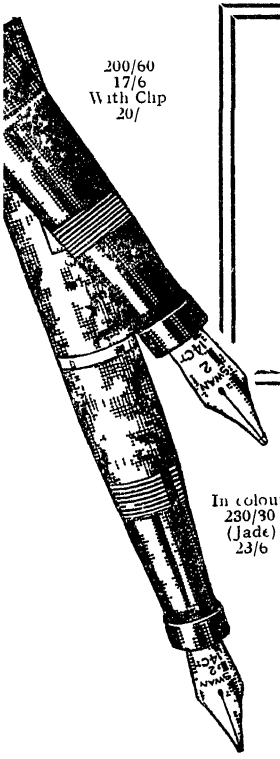
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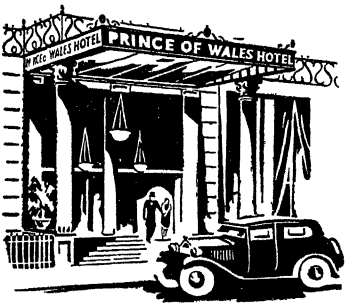
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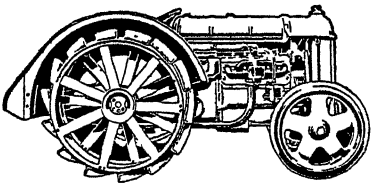
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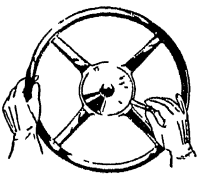
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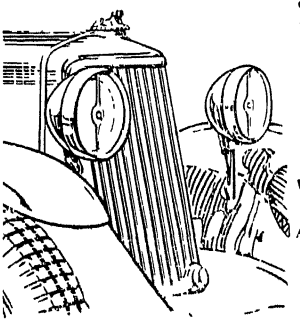
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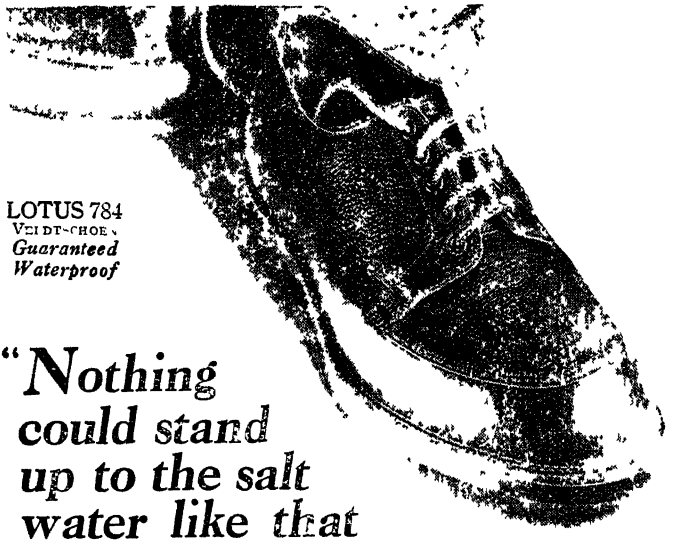
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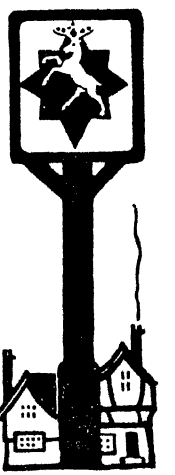
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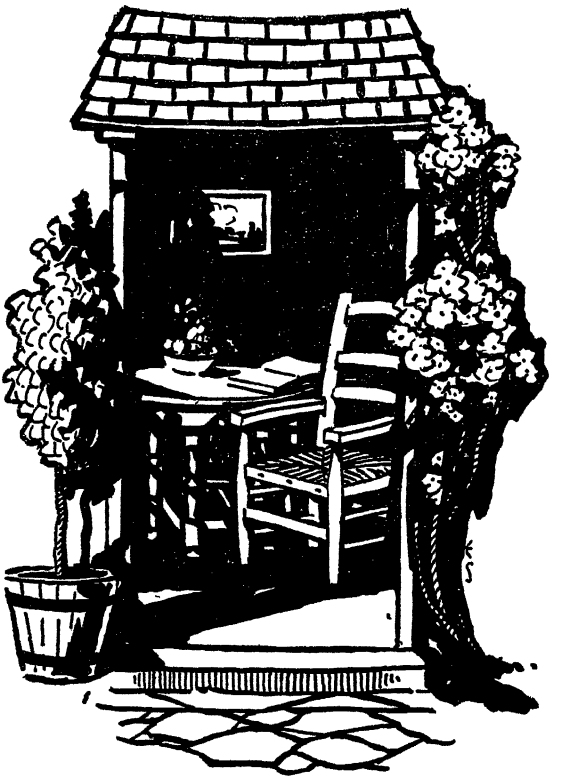
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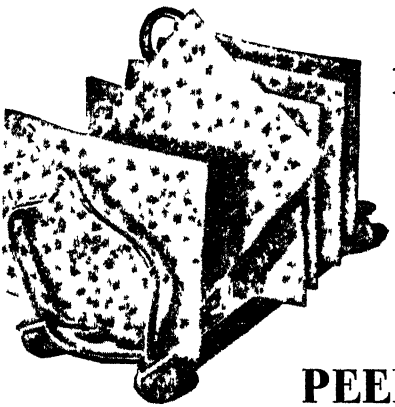
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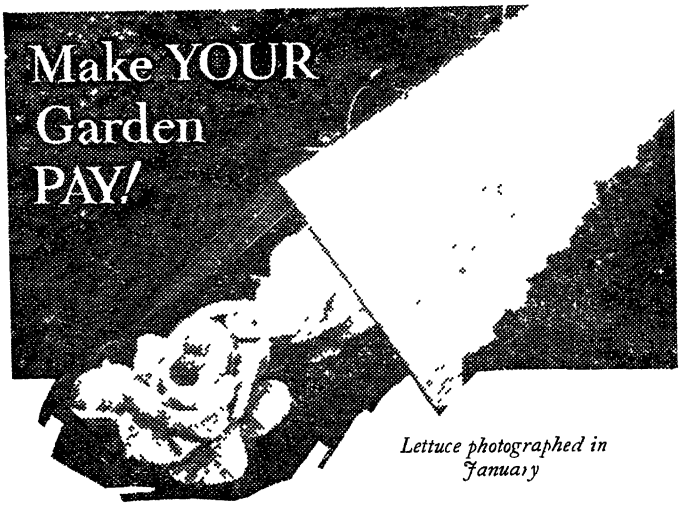
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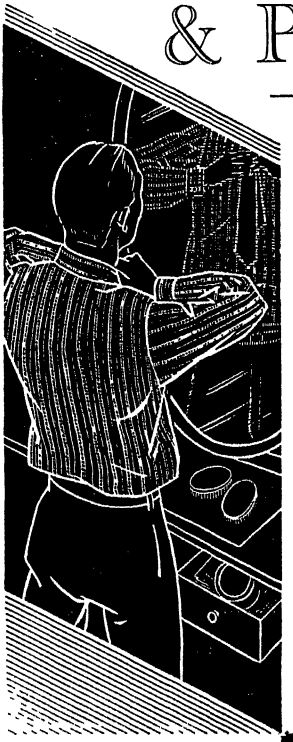
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The best citizens spring from the cultivators—*Cato*
Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee—*Job*
O more than happy country man if only he knew his good fortune!—*Virgil*

Vol. VI. No. 1 2s. 6*d.* quarterly April 1932

My Sparrows

by J. Cecilia Mayer

WHEN the men who were doing up the front of the house tore down the Virginia creeper, they found a nest with five young sparrows in it, and put it on a window sill near the ground. Of course the cat found it. Two sparrows had been eaten when L. discovered the nest and rescued the other three. L. has three very large cats. As I was recovering from an illness she brought up the nest to me in a cat's travelling box and I took charge. We discussed food, but neither of us knew anything about young sparrows, except that their mothers rammed things down their throats and that some birds ate worms. Worms are messy, and rather horrid to get, so the next best thing was raw meat. L. said she would send up a small piece of the cat's meat every day. I had no idea how often the small things should be fed, but they soon taught me that, and many

other things besides. When I took off the lid of the box the little creatures looked up, and two opened their beaks very wide indeed. It was quite simple to put in a little bit of meat. The other little one I took out in my hand, but nothing I could do would make it open its beak. The next day the little life went out.

I instituted a saucer of bread and milk on a small table with the meat, and everything went on beautifully for three weeks. The small birds always slept quietly at night, and would begin to 'cheep' in the morning between six and seven, when I got up, spread a sheet of paper on the carpet, took them out, fed them, and arranged the nest and box. It was soon apparent that the nest was alive with vermin, so we made a nest of paper, and had for wraps flannelette. The feeding time is every two hours. Almost to the minute they would begin their little calls. It was great fun, and I became thoroughly interested. Soon they began to hop about the floor, and showed they knew me and were not in the least afraid. Then they tried to fly, just on to the edge of the box at first, then to the chairs and bed. There were some nasty falls. Feathers came quickly. Then the creatures had to be taught to peck. At first it seemed impossible to make them look down, instead of up, for food. So I split the difference, as it were, and held the meat and bread and milk between my fingers. The birds made weak, erratic pecks, which grew stronger, and I gradually lowered the fingers, and with the fingers the little heads came to the floor.

But the birds always loved to be fed. One

perched on the first finger and one on the little finger of my left hand. The stronger one, which I called the little brother, always came on to the first finger, and would sometimes try to take the little sister's piece, until he understood he mustn't. She would sit thoughtfully waiting, with her head on one side. She always had a more aloof, dreaming air, and surprising gentleness. Then the brother began to make stronger and longer flights, round the room and on to the top of the wardrobe with the little sister after him. It was pretty to watch them, but they did not always judge their distance well, and landings were not so good as they might have been. Often they would come to an outstretched arm or alight on my shoulder, and they would talk in little cheeps, and chirps, and with quivery wings.

Then one day the venturesome little brother flew out through the top of the open window. I saw him go across the lawn to the trees on the other side, and the little sister tried to follow through the window, but fell between the upper and lower halves. The workmen heard me, and the young foreman came along the scaffolding, gently lowered the upper part of the window and the bird was enclosed in my waiting hands. They all seemed to think it best to let her go too. I said, 'She shall choose', and held my left hand, on which she sat, her little feet clinging to my first finger, at the open window. She looked thoughtfully out over the garden. L. said, 'She doesn't seem anxious to leave you; I don't believe she will'. Then the little creature looked up at me, deliberately turned round on my

finger, so that her back was towards the garden and she faced the room, and cheeped. They all exclaimed and I said, 'She has chosen – to stay'. The foreman said, 'I've never seen anything like that,' and the other man, 'Nor I!' and L., 'I think it's wonderful'.

So we turned away from the window into the room, and talked, and I kissed the little thing – she always felt safe near my face – and she slept on the front of my dressing-gown. Lying there quietly on the bed, I suddenly heard loud chirping in the garden, looked out and saw the yellow cat crouching in the middle of the lawn. L. running to him and calling to him to 'let it go', dropped her handkerchief over something small that fluttered away from the cat's paws–the little brother. I took him into my hands. He knew me, answered when I spoke, took two pecks of bread and milk, but was suffering. I put both birds into the nest and tucked them lightly in, and when I peeped at them again the last thing at night they were both sleeping. He lived the next day, but could not eat, and it was heartbreaking to see the patient, sweet, courage of the little thing. He would answer when I spoke to him, and seemed to like being in my hand. When I put him down he would hop slowly away into a corner and stand with drooping head. When I put him in the box he walked unsteadily into a dark corner, a tiny, pathetic little brave soul. He was wounding in the beauty of his acceptance of inexorable fate. He was alive when I looked in the box at 10 o'clock but at 1 o'clock he was dead, lying on his side in the folds of the blanket. The next day L. buried him for me.

Another little life had returned to the Life Universal. These things tear one. They are life, reality; and perhaps, after all, in the Great Scheme, we are not so very much more than the birds.

For five weeks the gentle, thoughtful little sister went on apparently quite happily. She used to play beautifully, chase my finger when I put it on her feet, take some of the hair on my forehead in her beak, run up my arms and round my neck, and when I took her in my hand to kiss her, struggle to get out, then cling to my finger waiting for more. Sometimes I would chase her up and down on the mantelpiece, with my lips. When I stopped she would run after my face for more kisses.

I took her out in the garden to accustom her to the trees, with a silk thread tied to her leg. This she resented very much, and pecked my fingers angrily to make me take it off. Then one day, when I thought she was strong enough, just before going out myself, I let her fly through the window. As I walked down to a seat under a tree beyond the lawn, some distance from the house, I called her, and presently she came into some bushes near and talked to me. And when tea came she flew on to my shoulder as usual. When I went in and called from the window, she answered but would not come. L. went round the garden but could not find her. In a few minutes I asked her to go to a clump of bushes whence I could hear the little voice. The bird went to her at once, and she brought her in.

A week later she decided to stay out all night. She answered, but would not come or be caught.

I was rather anxious, but it was a fairly warm night, and a beginning had to be made. At seven o'clock the next morning I called through the window, which was half way up at the bottom, and in a few minutes the dear little shape came flying very fast and alighted on my shoulders. She talked a lot, was very quivery, and showed me in many of her own pretty ways that she was glad to see me. I fed her, and directly afterwards she went to sleep inside the front of my bathrobe. She slept most of that day, just waking for feeding, then going to sleep, either on me, or on an evergreen branch placed in a vase on the mantelpiece for her to perch on. After that every day she flew in and out, came to me in the garden, shared my lunch and tea, sitting on my shoulder or wrist, but came back at night for some time.

One day I saw a lover go to her in the pear tree. He hung above her, and tried to fold his wings round her body. She accepted it all with gentle interest, but the next morning in bed, when she was sitting on my left wrist, she suddenly began to sing. It sounds quite mad, but the notes were lovely liquid notes. I wondered what was happening to her, or to me! One rainy afternoon she came in all wet. I dried her with a handkerchief, and after a meal, she slept inside the front of my dressing jacket. At bedtime I warmed her blanket, and when I put her in the nest, and she felt how cosy it was, she gave a little squeak of delight, and settled down with sweet satisfied flutters, and slept until I looked in the box the next morning. She would not go out at all that day. It was as though she did not want

to leave me. It was cloudy and chilly. But the following day was fine and we both went out and had lunch and tea as usual. Numbers of friends often came down to the tree to see her. It was such a charming sight. From between my lips she would take cake and nuts I chewed up for her. She would perch on the first finger of my left hand, which I held near my face, draw herself up to her utmost height, waiting; and if the chewing process took too long, gently peck my mouth.

As the summer months went by she became much stronger, and her feathers changed to deeper colours. The head gardener often hovered near when we were in the garden, and many times he said, 'I've never seen anything like that, not for a *wild* bird, and I've had a lot of birds in my time'. Soon she made it quite clear that she preferred staying out at night with other sparrows, so I did away with the paper nest, and returned the box to L. For a time my little bird seemed to attach herself to a sparrow mother and child. One day in the garden a mother brought a young one into the bush my bird was sitting in. Then the mother flew away to get food, coming back to ram something down her offspring's throat. Then she flew away again. My bird watched this, and once when the mother went away, hopped up beside the baby. Just then L. joined me at the seat. I told her what was happening and showed her the two sitting side by side. Once my bird moved away, and flew to L.'s shoulder.

One day, sitting up in bed by the open window, a full-grown sparrow flew past with two small shapes lagging along behind. I called on chance. One of

the small shapes swerved, turned – it was very pretty to watch – came in at the window, and on to my extended hand. Once when she was playing with me on the bed we heard a bird outside say 'Thiss! Thiss!'. My bird drew herself up and then with a squawk like a hen, dashed inside my dressing-gown and ran up on to my shoulder, staying there perfectly still. Twice afterwards I heard her make that queer squawk: one day when we heard an angry bird in the trees, and again when I was packing to come away and the room was all upset. She flew in, alighted on the mantlepiece, gave one look round and flew out again. Not long afterwards she came back, and I persuaded her to stay.

I was going away and had to leave her. Six times every day the last three days she came in. Two days before I left she was on the mantelpiece, and I was kissing her, when suddenly she turned and kissed me between the lips, straight in the mouth, twice three times, and once, twice, eight times altogether. It seemed a passionate demonstration of affection. At times she seemed to be more than a bird, and Joan of Arc said birds come between the human kingdom and the angels. It was a bitter parting.

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IN our review of the 'Purefoy Letters' we stated in reference to Shalstone Manor, which has never changed hands by sale from the reign of Edward I to that of George V, that 'the male line ended towards the close of the eighteenth century with Henry Purefoy'. We now notice that the old house is in the occupation of a Purefoy who is a subscriber to THE COUNTRYMAN. This is Admiral Purefoy, who assumed by licence the name of Purefoy in lieu of Fitzgerald. He is the eldest son of Richard Purefoy Fitzgerald.

A Cartoon by Thomas Derrick



HAPPILY A WILD PLANT CONSERVATION BOARD IS AT WORK AND WE MAY NOT COME TO THIS

Being Watched

by Sylvia Townsend Warner

BESIDE me while I grub up weeds alone
Watches the woman unknown,
Who left this house a twelvemonth since to find
Another more to her mind.
With folded hands she waits, nor feels the heat
Though in the sun I sweat;
The stormcloud threatens her, but does not budge,
And summoned by the trudge
Of homing feet, and cups clashed down on trays,
The idle housewife stays.
Between her watching and me working dwells
The lagging wreath that swells
From the slow-burning and scant-glowing mass
Of bindweed and couch-grass,
And not more mutely or more constantly
Sojourns on air than she.

Let the smoke watch, let the slow watcher burn –
I have a deeper concern,
That winds my thought through earth in endless
travel
As I bend to unravel
This warfare newly taken on with weeds;
And yet my sense conceded
An imprint stamped on me insensibly
By her long scrutiny:
'I fought these twining foes my lifetime through;
Now they have shackled you.'

I raise my eyes to confront the darkened air,
And other watchers are there.

Us with indifferent contented gaze
The empty house surveys.
The hedgerow ash its gossip with the wind
Breaks off awhile to find
New talking matter in a comparison
Of me new-come, she gone.
'One woman or another, 'tis no odds. . . .
Now this one grubs and plods
Much as the other did whose ghost stands by.'
'No odds,' the weeds reply;
And silently plum tree and apple tree
Reach on, and root in me.

For Countrymen and Countrywomen - 21

1. A Victorian poet wrote of 'amber daffodils sheeting the floors of April'. Name? – 2. On whose tombstone is it written, 'He was indefatigable in the study of rural economy'? – 3. Of whom was it said that 'he was always much delighted with the wholesome smell of the stable'? – 4. How do the following countries rank in order of their 10 years average production of wheat per acre: Belgium, Great Britain, Switzerland, New Zealand, Sweden and United States? – 5. What is the longest distance to which a creeper (liana) has been known to extend itself? – 6. What philosopher expressed the opinion that farmers were never content unless it was raining on the turnips while the sun was shining on the corn?

For Answers, see page 269.

A COUNTRY drapery shop has just unearthed a large shiny black cloth funeral cloak, 'used to hire out for funerals – at 8*s.* 6*d.* if you hired a dozen cloaks, or 10*s.* for a single cloak'.

My Island & our Life There - 4

by R. M. Lockley

HOW the author came into possession of an island off the Welsh coast, full of wild birds and flowers, how he found treasure trove in the wreck of an abandoned schooner; how, after building a house out of the wreck, he brought his bride – this having been told, Mr. Lockley records the experiences of himself, his wife and little daughter.

IT is as well that I am no capitalist, else in my haste to have a farm on the Island I should probably destroy much of the peculiar charm which lies in its wide-open-ness, its acres of luxuriant wild flowers, heather, and sage stretching over field and cliff alike. Certainly many sea-pies and gulls would be driven out before the plough and harrow, and by restoring the hedge-walls the puffins and shearwaters would have to take to the already overcrowded cliffs. On the other hand I sometimes think this would be compensated for by the return of the 'arable-land birds'. I should welcome the corn-bunting with his 'little bit of bread'. I should be sure of partridges, and almost as sure of corncrakes, which love coast-meadows. Swallows and wagtails would return to the cowsheds. I should have more blackbirds and dunnocks about the garden. Perhaps robins, wrens, and song-thrushes, enjoying the shelter of the new hedges, would be persuaded to stay on and nest; at present they only winter here.

Indeed I am torn between the desire to lead a simple pastoral life and the wish to become a busy farmer. Each has many advantages and brings to mind pictures rich in interest and beauty. Would the worry, the muck, the hard work and the boating of heavy stock and plant, involved in having a general farm, outweigh the benefits of being able to produce almost all our food, of having an absorbing interest in the land at every season of the year.

Our goats give an abundance of rich, appetising milk, which makes a sweet cream cheese; but the butter is inferior, almost flavourless. Therefore I intend to start cautiously this spring with a cow and calf, the nucleus, perhaps, of the future herd. We shall see if her milk attains the proberbial creaminess from the sweet salty pastures. We shall also see how much of our freedom we shall lose by being tied to cows and butter-making. I think little. Now that we have nearly a hundred breeding ewes I have found it best to engage a man and a boy permanently. The work got beyond our capacity, what with boating, gardening, and family cares as well. We are hoping that we shall have freedom to leave them in charge when the desire takes us to cruise.

Ivor, born and schooled in the backwater of an industrial city, leaving school and a newsboy's career to come to the island, arrived at the height of the bird and flower season in June. For some time he moved about among the nests dumbfounded. He could not believe that such wealth and beauty existed. 'Lor', there's eggs! there's *millions* of 'em!' was his continual comment on the hundreds of gulls' nests he met at every step. It was a long

time before he settled down to work, his eyes turned longingly all day to the soaring gulls and screaming sea-pies, and in his evenings he ran wild with them. The impulse to take their eggs was destroyed in the presence of such abundance. He came home each night breathless with the adventures he had had in wonderland.

His mate is Gwyn, twice Ivor's age, a lifeboatman, a lover of birds, the sort that finds association with the sea necessary to life. I am glad I found Gwyn. He likes the things I like, even – and this is exceptional in local men – to living on an island.

We are returning to fishing this summer. It was a mistake ever to have given it up. I confess that all through that season when we did not fish, I was chagrined to see the other boats round the island catching lobsters on our doorstep, or at any rate our landing-step. I forgot the back-breaking pulling at oar and rope, the uncomfortable bumping in tideways, the stench of stale bait, the empty days, the storms that destroyed our pots. I remembered only the calm of sunlit days when each pot held a wary crustacean, and we basked with the puffins on the rippleless sea. So we shall start again. Now that spring is upon us our fingers grow feverish at the withies, impatient to get the pots finished, eager to splice and stretch the tarry ropes.

While the others are at this last task I come into my special province, that of shepherd. Because cold winds and sweeping gales may still visit us we delay the lambing until All Fool's Day. Then what a spate of curlycoats arrives to gambol over new-flowering primroses, violets, celandines, and cam-

pion! It is an exquisite pleasure, a magic privilege to walk around the island then and attend these solicitous mothers and their care-free offspring, when every stroll brings to view new flowers and hosts of seafowl arrive and streams of migrants pass. By mid-April, bluebell time, most of the sheep have lambed and the weather is mild enough for the rest to be born in comfort, almost without anxiety on our part. It is astonishing how quickly the later lambs will grow and catch up with the earlier ones. They quite equal March lambs on the mainland, which often suffer a set-back during a cold spell. Lambing over, what a profound satisfaction to watch the whole flock, ewes and lambs, walking through the North Haven Bluebell Meadow early in May. I have no wish to be anything but a shepherd in this sweet spring season.

Ann came after the lambs in May. Convenience dictated that she should be born on the mainland. Three weeks later I came over to fetch her and her mother. The 'Storm-Petrel', newly painted for the event, flew a pennon at bow and at masthead. The day was calm with warm sunshine struggling to dispel the morning vapour. When we drew in towards the island harbour, we were pleased to see it festooned with bunting. The flags spelt out a gay 'W-E-L-C-O-M-E' in the international code. The lightkeepers stood to salute us, and a cheer was raised as eager hands lifted the Princess's cradle ashore. Edward the donkey was there, harnessed to carry her, still sleeping from the rocking of the boat, up to the house, above which the three code-flags spelling her name stirred gently in the windless

air. Our flagstaff had been made into a maypole, and later when the mist cleared all the flags danced to the tune played by the north wind in the stay-wires.

Loving birds as we do, we constitute ourselves their guardians in our area of the sea. We are honorary watchers for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and therefore invested with a certain authority. This being known locally is in itself enough to prevent breaches of the Wild Birds Act being lightly made, and almost all the offences have been trivial. The most objectionable offence and the most difficult to prove is the discharge of waste oil by tankers at sea. All through the year we find seabirds dead and dying, coated with clinging tarry oil, of which they cannot possibly rid themselves. The menace is world-wide and will persist as long as ships are free to discharge outside territorial waters. As a rule oil-ships empty their bilges at a point on their route when they are far enough from land to be safe from observation. When the coaster 'B——', on a grey day in October, passed close enough to the island for us to read her name with the glasses, she had already discharged her bilges for ten long oily miles astern, no doubt convinced at that distance from the mainland no coastwatcher would see her. She was not afraid of lighthouses; Trinity House gets revenue, in the form of light-dues, from passing ships. We saw her, however, and for the first time under the Oil Pollution Act the R.S.P.B. secured a conviction for the first offence, with a penalty of £25 and costs.

Our island attracts more and more visitors. On fine summer days we see them boldly approaching under sail or power. First and most welcome are the ornithologists, botanists, archæologists, and other 'ologists, breed of men and women who, in their zeal face bad weather cheerfully, as for instance when a party of seven came over with me in the 'Storm Petrel'. It had not been any too pleasant at the start, and rain and wind set in when we reached the open sea. So much did the swell increase that when we got to our harbour we found it to be impossible to land, the strong south wind blowing directly upon the steps. When one well-known photographer made the attempt he found himself clinging to the mooring-ropes in mid-air over the raging swell for a few anxious seconds. He was hastily pulled back into the boat again. The motor safely bore us out of the roaring harbour and I was relieved to find less swell in North Haven, where the cliffs screened off the wind. We landed everything without mishap to apparatus or person, though I could not help overhearing the whispered, 'Awful, wasn't it?' When it was time for the party to leave a gale sprang up and kept them prisoners for two more days.

A visitor who arrived for a few days' holiday before work in connection with the 1931 census was similarly prevented from returning for four days. The census authorities were distracted over his disappearance, yet curiously enough they completely overlooked the island community when compiling the returns!

Then there are the fine weather day-visitors who

are not naturalists, but merely curious to see what we are doing – the sort who lay out and plan the place unasked. 'Why don't you do this, and that? If I were you. . . .' Some do not ask permission to land but invade us, as in the case of a motor-yacht which, while we were at tea in the bowl of the 'mountain', landed twelve men and a case of beer and gazed upon us. My Customs Department does not permit entry of 'hootch' so easily, so it had to be returned on board and I saw that the party followed as soon as possible. Again, there was the ardent young man, full of enthusiasm for a Robinson Crusoe life, who begged permission to start it on the island and arranged to meet me at Martinshaven. He duly arrived, fully equipped, tent, provisions and all, to find a cold dense wet sea-mist wrapping the coasts. Expecting that this would lift later I bade him be prepared to cross at a specified time, but when the mist cleared he had cleared too. Others, more frank about their faint hearts, have confessed to loving an island life best on paper.

Here, from the log-book, are the records of four March days:

Tuesday. A lovely day with a big flock of migrants on the island, hundreds of starlings, a few rooks, a corn-bunting, many wheatears, chaffinches and pipits. Carried on with the garden after a mishap in rescuing from the sea a big length of a ship's mast. In lashing this to the landing I stepped neatly into the water up to my neck, but I secured the mast. When the tide had ebbed we were able to cut it into sections, and roll them up the steps. At 4 p.m. we went to the mainland, crossing before

the gentle S.E. breeze. Back by moonlight on the now calm sea. There was a circle around the full moon, and St. Ann's light was reflected in a path of gold on the silvered water, both signs we know now as portents of bad weather.

Wednesday. Bitter S.E. gale, temperature a few degrees above freezing. A great many migrants on the lee side, including a black redstart. A chiff-chaff in the heather, the first. The young ravens are too big for the nest now and stand on the edge of the cliff in Mad Bay, impatient for food. In Peter's Bay and South Haven, we collected two sacks of firewood, a plank 19 feet long, a Gulf Stream log (covered with living barnacles), a lump of solidified palm oil (about 10 lbs., useful for greasing boat's keel), two glass floats, an embroidered pillow case, several corks (useful for fishing-buoys), a dead shag and a kittiwake, much seaweed and a few bamboos (useful for beansticks).

Sunday. Fog, with duck (widgeon, teal, mallard) calling late on the pond in the morning, loth to fly out into the mist. Lovely sunny and calm afternoon. Had old Richard, the first rabbit-catcher I ever employed, been here he would have asked permission to raise the flag. He had two passions. One was to raise the flag on fine Sunday mornings. If the day was calm and sunny it gave him untold satisfaction to see the flag gently stirring overhead. It crowned the peacefulness and loveliness of the day for him. Then, with a turf-spade on his shoulder he would indulge his other hobby, that of draining damp places and standing water off the island. He derived a childlike pleasure from having the

water under his control. After lunch we decided to cross for stores and mail. When we set out on the return at 5 p.m. the fog had settled again. We steered S.W. by compass and made landfall a few score yards from the roaring surf of Mad Bay. Thence we went by way of the Stack, home to South Haven. It was dark by the time we were hauled up.

Monday. Calm, still with wisps of fog. Wrens, robins and thrushes singing; they will have left us next week. The first lambs arrived, twins. All day, between looking at the ewes, at the boat. Turned her bottom up on the slip, and managed to lay an oak batten, tapered each end, along her keel; also two oak bilge-pieces as fenders. All this to make hauling easier on beach and slip. Tarred her underwater strakes, and replaced many burst copper rivets.

The first time we voyaged abroad with Ann the wicker cradle fitted nicely into the cockpit where the old engine used to be. In her early days this movement of the boat nearly always sent her to sleep, but at times her eyes would be open and would be attracted by a gull passing overhead or by the kittiwake which often settled on the truck of the mast. A year later her little hands would be raised towards the bird. Now that she is able to dispense with the cradle, she sits and points out the birds to us, sometimes before we have noticed them ourselves. When the sea is calm she walks about with enthusiasm, steadying herself with her small legs to match the angle of the swaying boat; but in tide-races and white, wind-whipped water there will be tears if she has not the protection of someone's arms.

My Lord's Petty Cash

IN a hasped, tooled green vellum gilt-edged volume, 'Lyonel' Tollemache, third Earl of Dysart, entered every payment he made, in amounts from hundreds of pounds to a halfpenny, from August 1765 to March 1770. In that month he died, 'in ye 62d. year of his age', as a note at the end of the book says, 'in a very sudden manner, supposed to have been owing to bleeding, with the Gout flying about him'. Although his wife's father had been a Secretary of State and a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Dysart does not seem to have had a public career. But he had fifteen children, and, as was the way in his days, not half of them survived infancy. Of his four sons one was killed at sixteen by falling from the mast-head of the 'Modest' man-of-war, a second died in a duel with Lord Muncaster in New York, while a third was lost in the 'Repulse' frigate in a hurricane. Lord Dysart lived at Helmingham in Norfolk, at Ham House, near Richmond-on-Thames, and in Norfolk Street, Strand. His cash book was written sometimes in one house and sometimes in another. It is largely occupied with tradesmen's bills, remittances to members of his family, and accounts with servants, usually allowed to run a year, and with payments made at inns, to turnpikes and postillions and for hackney coaches. The extracts which have been made have been chosen for the way in which they reflect the habits and conditions of a century and a half ago. The writing is clear, the dates are often in red ink, and the spelling, which is reproduced

exactly, is remarkably modern. Charities are more numerous than is indicated by the entries printed below. Indeed the impression one gets of Lord Dysart is that he was a good-natured if careful soul. A few of the items are not easily accounted for. Why was it necessary to buy so many pairs of pincers and 'plyers'? Saddlery breaking? A noteworthy thing is the number of entries concerning the engraving of seals. The purchases of scent are considerable. It was a smelly age.

Peter Vicira, Portuguese Wine Merchant, one Dozen of Madeira	1	16	0
Pound of Havannah Snuff	0	16	0
Supper, Lodging, Breakfast at ye Spread Eagle, Ingatestone, two Carriages greas'd, included 6d. to the Servants	1	12	6
Lady Huntingtower at her own Request to Buy Herself a Birth Day Gown	50	0	0
Labourer for Bringing my Spying Glass which He found	0	2	6
Butcher's Servt what I us'd to give at Xmas	1	1	0
Kerridge of Ipswich, Taylor, so much be allow'd him with Lee's new Green Plush Livery which were never Wore, and the Bill for them was £6 16 0	3	0	0
Quin's Life with Jests	0	3	0
Shoemaker for making Shoes for my Sons and Daughters from ye 7th of April 1765 to ye 7th of March 1766	2	16	0
Pair of Stag Horns at 4d. pr Pound [to make smelling salts]	0	2	0
Pound of Naples Honey	0	1	6
2 Cakes of French Soap	0	1	6
Cleaning my Teeth	2	2	0

Laundress half a years Wages	3	0	0
A Year's Window Tax	2	15	6
Two Pairs of Stays for Jane & Louisa	3	12	0
Ink	0	0	0½
Volatile Salts	0	1	0
In Charity [a common entry]	0	0	2
Two Ass Skin Pocket Books	0	0	6
Strawberries	0	2	0
Two fine Cotton Night Caps	0	5	0
French Roll [a frequent purchase]	0	0	1
Jane, a Gingham Gown with gold Sprigs	3	15	0
Three Cakes of Solid Soupe	0	1	0
Sylver chas'd Breeches Buckle	0	4	6
A Driving Book for Fanny	0	1	6
Pound Ratafia Cakes	0	2	6
Gardiner for making ye Sunk Ditch, altering ye Parterre and filling up ye Pond, Ham House	360	17	3
Sending a letter by the Waterman to Ham	0	0	1
A White Silk Purse	0	3	6
Porteridge for a Melon	0	1	6
A Sword Belt	0	6	6
Martha Baker, Mantua-Maker, for making Gowns &c. for Louisa & Jane ye 15th Septr. 1762 to ye 26th of Octr. 1765	9	7	6
A qtr Pound Vermicelli	0	0	5
Duty on two four wheel'd Carriages	8	0	0
Quarter of an Hundred of Pens	0	1	3
To Jane to pay for a Tambour	1	11	6
Pound of Dry'd Apricocks	0	6	0
½ Pound of Macaroni	0	0	10
One quart of Rhenish	0	2	0
Two Loads of Dung	0	10	0
Ounce of Coffee	0	0	5
Pound of Hair Powder	0	0	6
One of the Newest Fashion'd Sylverhilted Sword with a Gilt Gripe	5	15	0

Coal at £1 19 0 per Chaldron	31	15	0
Pot of Pomatum	0	0	3
Kew Bridge & turnpike going in my Post Chaise to Town & returning	0	2	4
One Dozen of Advertiz'd Claret	1	16	0
To a Barber's Boy	0	1	0
Quart of Syrop of Marsh Mallow	0	8	0
Mrs. Chudleigh's Woman Servt. bringing a present of some Catchup			
Postman of Isleworth Eight Weeks bringing ye Gazettes to Ham House	0	14	0
Charity to a Dumb Woman	0	0	6
A Boy opening a Gate	0	0	0½
A Porter who brought a Present of Portugal Onions	0	1	0
Three Chamber Pots	0	2	6
A Cane String [?for a walking stick]	0	1	0
Cook & Chambermaid at Three Cups	0	3	6
The Waiter	0	2	6
Serjeant Corn Cutter for Paring my Finger and Toe Nails	0	10	6
Frances & Jane for putting their Teeth in order	2	2	0
Three Minc'd Pyes	0	3	0
Cockrel ye Blind Fidler	0	1	0
A poor decay'd Farmer	0	2	6
Jack Sevvil for Sweeping the Steps going down to the Vault	0	1	0
Five Small Spunges	0	1	10
Enquiring for a Servant at ye Office Chairing Cross	0	1	0
2 Macarel	0	2	0
Frances & Jane for Two Lute String Gowns They Bought for Themselves	14	8	0
Ditto for two Lute String Night Gowns	4	19	6
Putting in five False Teeth	2	12	6
Two Colly Flowers	0	1	6

¼ Pd. of Sewet	0	0	1½
Paper ½ Quire Gilt	0	0	6
Two Mahogany Candle Stands	0	10	0
To Handling Seven China Cups	0	7	0
Pound & Half of Bacon	0	1	4½
Moulsey Bridge airing in my Chaise	0	1	0
Pint of Peppermint Water	0	0	6
Dozen of Japan Hooks for Pictures	0	1	0
Three Ounces of Rappee	0	0	9
Three Fowls	0	6	0
Goose with the Giblets	0	4	0
Pound of Ginger Bread Nuts	0	0	10
Twelve Italian Wash Balls	0	10	6
Couple of Rabbets	0	2	0
Carriage o Goods by the Waggon	0	6	8
Gold Button for my Hat	0	1	0
Pound of Green Tea	0	16	0
Ye Fishmongers Girl	0	3	0
Three Gardiners Six days	1	7	0
For catching twelve moles	0	4	0
To buy a knife for me	1	1	0
Charcoal	2	13	8
Shaving & dressing wigs	0	1	0
Macaroons, Biscuits, Burnt Almonds, Orange Chips, a pound of each	0	0	10
Half Peck of Elder Berries	0	1	6
Twelve Codlings	0	0	6
Barrel of Oysters	0	4	3
6 White Stone Plates	0	1	0
Three Viols of Hills Essence of Water Dock	0	9	0
One year's Rate for the Watchmen and Beadles	1	0	0
To the housemaid which she found of mine	0	10	6
Four Tickets at ye Concert	0	10	0
Six Wine Glasses	0	3	0
A Bread Rasp	0	1	4
A Poor Woman I met in the Park	0	1	0

One Crow Who Sung	0	2	6
For five Nights Lodging, Two Beds, two different times at Hayward's ye Upholsterers at Ipswich	4	4	0
To my daughter by the Post in Bank Notes as a Present towards buying her a Pair o Diamond Ear Rings	100	0	0
Duty on Four Thousand Ounces of Plate	10	0	0
A Poor Labourer when I rode out	0	1	0
Dr. Venn of Ipswich attending Jane twice in a Post Chaise	4	4	0
A Fisherman for a Salmon Catch'd in ye river Deben	0	10	6
One of the Maids at Bawdsey for ye Use of Her Knife	0	1	0
Ye Cow Boy for ye Use of His	0	1	0
New Queue Wig	1	5	0
Pair of Boot Stockings	0	2	9
Six Seville Oranges	0	0	9
A large solid leather Portmantle	3	10	0
A Man at Tottenham who help'd to tye ye Shaft of ye Chaise being broke	0	0	3
Ounce of Gascoigne Powder	0	16	0
Pound of Grey Hair Powder	0	2	0
Charity	0	0	0½
Seeing ye Collection of Dead Birds near ye Exchange	0	1	0
Tortoise Shell Comb	0	0	8
Looking Glass for Jane	0	7	0
Political Prints	0	12	6
To a Gardiner Who found ye Dog Bango in ye King's Road & kept him a fortnight	0	3	6
One Lemon	0	0	1½
Three Pairs of Silk Hose for Frances & Jane	1	7	0
Pair of Clouded Blue Worsted Hose	0	4	6
Mending a Metal Tooth Pick Case for Jane	0	1	6

Two Flasks of Spa Water	0	1	8
Two Chrystal Glass Bottles for Ink	0	1	0
To ye Job Postilion a Fort Night's Beer	0	7	0
To ye Peerage of G. Britain & Ireland 3 Vols. sew'd	0	12	0
Two Stafford Milk Pots	0	0	8
Six Pippins	0	0	6
A Book call'd Daphnis and Chloe	0	0	3



A PACK HORSE BRIDGE IN LANCASHIRE
The walls are low in order that the pack shall not touch them

Farming and the Countryside Fifty Years Hence

WITH things as they are just now our minds must run on the future of the countryside. What are likely to be the changes in five, ten, twenty, fifty years? We asked a few of our readers what they felt about it. One authority who has never hesitated to say what he thought wrote, 'I cannot forecast the future for one month'. Another well-known landowner thought that 'in another year it might be possible'. A statesman said, 'I should not like to prophesy as far ahead as ten years'. An agricultural economist's view was that 'no imbecilities are impossible'. A distinguished publicist confessed to being 'bewildered'. A famous agricultural author would only say that the future was 'most uncertain'. A few subscribers were more courageous and we thank them for these interesting letters – and for speaking their minds!

1. *Sir Daniel Hall, F.R.S., Chief Scientific Adviser of the Ministry of Labour*

OUR agriculture does not stand alone and self-contained. It is but a part of world agriculture, and even world agriculture is dominated by the general course of trade and industry. The low prices of agricultural produce have not been caused by internal or external over-production, but are part of the general loss of value of all materials. One might even attempt alternative predictions (*a*) on the hypothesis that the nations recover their sanity and consent to mutual prosperity, (*b*) assuming that they persist in the current policies of isolation and determination to injure other nations'

trade in the hope of promoting their own. But such speculations, however logical, might be regarded as fantastic. So I will content myself with a word or two about tendencies; let others draw their conclusions as to the resultant of the forces at work.

We begin with the consideration that all farming was in the beginning an affair of individual peasant effort, if we ignore some primitive communal or tribal organization of which we know very little. Nearly the whole of European land-holding is on this basis. Even in the newer countries, America and Australia, the typical farm may be as large as a thousand acres but it is worked by one man and his family. The history of farming for the last four hundred years has been the changes forced upon this primitive system, first by commerce and latterly by science. The demands of commerce for men and materials led in this country, to a general, if incomplete, rolling up of the peasant farms into larger units, producing greater surpluses for sale. During the last sixty years or so, science, under which category I include modern developments of machinery, transport and organization, has been making the living of the peasant farmer more precarious.

For example, the plant breeders have produced wheats that will grow over vast areas that were unfit for the old wheats, and the price of wheat has fallen to a level unremunerative to the European farmer. Similarly, the improvements in the sugar cane have left European beet sugar unable to compete with cane sugar. The pressure of this competition is, if anything, severer on the British type of farmer, paying wages, than on the peasant. Even where science has not directly set up the competition, modern commercial organization has learnt how to marshal the produce of the countries which have a low standard of living. The world price of articles like eggs and butter is determined by the lowest price which the Eastern European peasant will be content with, and in the Far East there still remains

even cheaper labour to be exploited. The Western European nations, which cannot risk the social dislocations that would follow the ruin of the peasants, meet this situation by a system of tariffs and bounties. It is impossible to make any drastic changes in the methods of peasant farming. There is, for example, nothing to substitute for sugar beet in the Continental system; consequently the fiscal arrangements of the countries dependent upon that crop must maintain an artificial price for beet sugar.

This, then, is the policy which most European States seem to have adopted, that peasant farming shall be preserved even at some cost to the taxpayer and the general consumer. Only such scientific progress as can be utilized by the peasant; e.g., cheaper fertilizers, better varieties, is allowed play; wherever it would render peasant farming uneconomic, and therefore threaten the peasant structure of society, its impact is prevented by legislation. The object is stability rather than efficiency, to maintain things as they are.

How in this country is agriculture moving in response to this pressure from outside? Long ago we mostly lost our peasant community and made a step towards a modern organization. Nowadays we have a certain number of farmers who are continuing along the same path, rationalizing their businesses and mechanizing their farms, meeting in fact the difficulties created by science by more science. They are fighting a difficult battle, needlessly aggravated by the world's financial troubles. There are a few such industrial farms in all countries, though many of them have been broken up since the War in response to the popular demand for land. That future of British farming which I am asked to predict may depend on the development of such farming; economic pressure will be pushing in that direction. On the other hand, I should judge that current opinion, both among agriculturists and public men, distrusts science and denies the possibility of organizing farming. They would restore the peasant system of landholding by degrees and are prepared

to accord the necessary protection. They hold that the maintenance of a strong contented population on the soil is well worth paying for by the State.

These are the two logical alternatives – rationalization of farming with a small number of workers whose labour is given a high efficiency through machines, science and organization; on the other hand, a denser population of relatively inefficient but hard-working peasants, individualists with a chance of rising. If we are to judge by agricultural considerations alone, farming will move, slowly of course, towards one or other of these alternatives.

But the situation may be dominated by non-agricultural considerations. There were many people, perhaps fewer to-day, who looked forward to such an expansion of the towns in England that all the countryside would be needed for the recreation of the urban dwellers, and for the convalescent homes, penal settlements, water supplies, sewage farms and other appurtenances of the city. There would be no room for large scale farming; only a certain number of small holdings for flower-growing and the like luxury trades, and for the tuberculous and neurasthenic who must lead a life in the open air. But Britain's manufacturing career

YOUNG BILL'S RURAL GUIDE: USEFUL HYBRIDS

THE
HENABBIT



24. *Lays a fine Easter Egg with Rabbit inside. Good Table Bird*

has received a check since those pre-war days when these visions were entertained. Indeed we are now confronted with quite other visions. Such advances, we are told, have taken place in chemical science that the next war, for which all preparations are being made, will begin with the destruction of the cities and towns of any magnitude, the death of all the clustered populations, and the end of the material fabric of our civilization. Then the life of the peasant would be resumed.

2. *A Distinguished Biologist*

20 *Years.* At last it will have been realized that the countryside is a heritage which has a worth beyond its value for producing certain commodities of food. Not only Governments but the people will be thinking constructively about the future of our besmirched 'green strip of fair King Richard's land'.

50 *Years.* Power will be electric and therefore clean, generated at certain points of our northern coal fields or brought across the Atlantic from the endless waterfalls of Newfoundland and Labrador. The amenities of civilization will allow that rural labour shall not take up the whole of men's time to the exclusion of cultural development. There will not be, therefore, intellectual isolation in our countryside. It will have been realized that agriculture, our largest industry, and the countryside in which it is pursued, have a cultural value in what will then be a determined effort towards the betterment of our race. And this effort will have been rendered the easier by advances in our knowledge of social biology. We shall think of the unconscious crimes of those ardent men who, in the nineteenth century, destroyed individuality in our poorer brethren in order to worship more efficiently the new god of mechanical industry. We shall think of our past foolishness: that we have been asses. But we shall have eaten rose leaves. With Apuleius we shall gaze on the fair serene vision of Isis, and perhaps in our

humbleness we shall enter into her felicity. For our sins, the cloak of Apuleius is still upon us. Perhaps, as yet, we cannot recognize rose leaves, even if we could reach to them and eat.

3. *A. W. Ashby, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Member National Agricultural Wages Board*

THE chief force which is shaping the trend of events in rural life is education. On the whole, country schools are improving very much faster than most people realize. Ever since about 1906, when the effects of the Education Act of 1902 began to appear, they have been playing a rapidly increasing part in the determination of future conditions. Their position is now higher, and their influence greater than they have ever been. There are still poor schools and poor staffs, but those we now think of as poor would have passed as acceptable twenty years ago. General improvement in methods of teaching, the 'centralizing' of the upper standards, the equipping of some central schools with more or less specially selected staffs, and the much higher proportion of children passing into secondary schools, are all changing the attitudes and improving the opportunities of country children.

YOUNG BILL'S RURAL GUIDE: USEFUL HYBRIDS



25. *Makes a lovely 'Shoulder' and 'Ham' Animal*

Most of the older generation are quite unaware of the change that is going on, for they are too near the day-to-day developments to appreciate their extent and importance. Even though we may slow down the material improvement in schools and staffs we shall not now stop the changes in country life which the schools have been preparing.

We must either remove most of the material disabilities which the adolescents and the young men and women of the rural districts now suffer or we must expect a further depletion of agricultural population. In spite of general economic depression there is still migration from some agricultural districts. Another break of industrial prosperity will bring such a spate of young persons from the agricultural districts as has never been seen before. And this may be the case even though we still carry more than a normal porportion of industrial unemployed. We shall not necessarily see a reduction in our *general* rural population, because we may expect a continuation of the return of non-agriculturists to rural residence, especially if possibilities of supplies of electric light and running water offer more attractions to women.

But children of agriculturists, wage-earners or small farmers, trained in the contemporary schools, are not going to suffer willingly the general meanness of the life which their parents have accepted. Do not think that the social amenities which have satisfied the present generation of adults during the past 10 years, while they have been increasing and improving, will meet the requirements of the generation which is now coming forward. The drag on developments arises from some ideas among the older folk that this thing and that 'are not for us'.

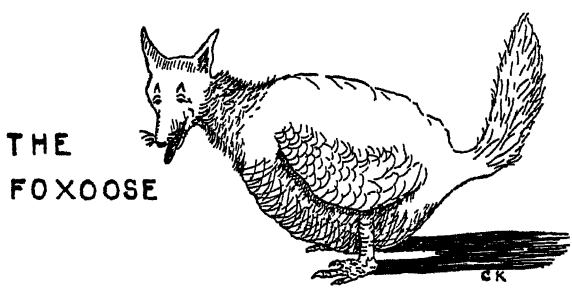
The changes required are not wholly social and general, for these depend on the technical and economic practices in agriculture. An open attitude towards possible changes in farm practices, farm equipment and marketing organization, practical enterprise in these matters is the first step. The

detailed character of the possible changes varies from district to district, and no suggestion would fit every area. Agricultural 'defeatism' is far too prevalent, but it is fortunate that, on the whole, it is more prevalent in public statements than in actual farm work and business, though even here there is too much of it.

The agriculture of the future will be based on the applied sciences, including economics or business organization and administration, even more than that of the last twenty years. British farmers have the opportunity of seeing what part of it is usable, and of using it, or seeing their competitors showing them the way. And no form of Protection will eventually enable them to avoid the necessity of doing so.

For good or ill, British agriculture and food supplies are indissolubly bound up with international agriculture and commerce, and applied sciences and economic organization will enable competitors to climb over every barrier. The British farmers, even the British Government, cannot alone determine the happenings of the next ten or twenty years. But between them they can determine what attractive, what repellent forces shall meet the youths from our schools.

YOUNG BILL'S RURAL GUIDE: USEFUL HYBRIDS



26. *Costs little to keep. Often brings home a Rabbit. Good protection for other Poultry. Lays a large, hairy Egg*

4. *A. H. Brown, Farmer-Owner and ex-Chairman of his county N.F.U.*

5 *Years.* I don't expect to see much change in actual Conditions, but there will be a change of heart. For instance, more and more people will awaken to the anarchy in the marketing of agricultural produce. While that exists it is difficult to see how there can be any improvement in real conditions in the villages and small towns.

10 *Years.* A strong movement may arise (after the marketing problem has been solved) for a more rational planning of agriculture. I expect to see large areas devoted to corn-growing on American and Russian lines under a single management. It is only by adopting this principle that corn-growing to any extent can continue in this country. On the other hand, there will be a move towards the intensive raising of stock, milk, poultry products, vegetables, fruit, flowers, etc., by the smaller farmers. No longer will intelligent small farmers grow their small acreages of corn and roots as heretofore.

20 *Years.* Each separate industry, milk, beef, corn, etc., will have its own marketing organization controlling the whole of the home supplies, in conjunction with Import Boards to control the volume of imports. This is indispensable, and tariffs or protective taxes will never do it. The increased prosperity accruing to agriculture will enable better wages to be paid, and by that time all the disgraceful and insanitary cottages should have been replaced by well-built modern ones with all modern requirements, water, electricity and good drainage. Every village will have a good bus service. Hours of work will of course be reduced. Every house will be equipped with the radio, and the consumption of good papers and periodicals will increase, and that of the gutter press will decrease.

50 *Years.* All agricultural land (that is land not 'developed') will be owned by the State. That will admit of two things. First, it will be impossible for a landowner to exploit the

community when land is wanted for communal purposes: for instance, a Rural District Council has just been forced to pay £400 an acre for agricultural land for an urgently-needed burial ground. Secondly, the proper equipment of land for maximum agricultural production will be simple and easy. At the present time a large percentage of farms are very badly equipped and the present owners have not the requisite capital or are not prepared to invest it. There cannot be a prosperous and happy countryside without the maximum investment of capital. The provision of this will be simple and easy in 50 years, because an enlightened people will see that capital should depend upon productivity – productivity is capital – and not upon the discovery of a worthless metal, or the accidental position of it. Above all, there will be a better educated countryside, in the best sense of the word. Many churches and chapels will be shut up for lack of support unless more of them are playing a greater part than they are now doing.

5. *The Right Hon. Sir Francis Acland*

5 *Years.* Led by Farmers' Union, farmers continue to shout for Protection and make no attempt to organize their industry. Bad agricultural depression.

10 *Years.* Ditto, ditto. Worse agricultural depression.

20 *Years.* Ditto, ditto. Industry ruined and bankrupt.

50 *Years.* Nation gets sick of it, turns farmers out and reorganizes whole business on Russian system.

6. *Guy Dawber, A.R.A., ex-President R.I.B.A.*

In fifty years we may be certain that areas of representative scenery in the Lakes, parts of Devonshire, and the Sussex Downs will be preserved. The railways will still be functioning for minerals and coal, etc., but the main transport will be by great arterial roads permeating the entire country. The use of the aeroplane for speedy passenger traffic will have become the recognized method of travel, and every town and large numbers of villages will have aerodromes as a matter

of course. The south of England, owing to the introduction of electricity, will have become the manufacturing area as the north formerly was, but with no smoke.

7. *Professor S. D. Adshead, F.R.I.B.A.*

The future of the countryside does not depend upon the countryside but upon what happens in urban areas. It is transport that has been responsible for saturating with urban influences all parts of the country accessible by road.

8. *Clough Williams-Ellis, F.R.I.B.A., President of the Design and Industry Association, Author of 'England and the Octopus', etc.*

1952. Having too long ignored the Russian experiment and neglected to note its successes as well as its failures, we had embarked on a feeble and totally inadequate project of national planning, collectivization, rationalization and mechanization wherein was repeated most of the Soviets' mistakes with many more of our own invention. So completely had the old regime been discredited by the universal breakdown of the national life that there was found none but a feeble and impotent minority to oppose the revolutionaries – by this time the overwhelming majority – their strength giving them a mildness that the rest of Europe was astounded to find allied with such iron determination. That almost bloodless revolution had nationalized the land and all the means of large scale production and much else, while leaving, to the horror of doctrinaires, a surprising number of minor loose ends lying about for the free manipulation, within limits, of congenital individualists. Somehow, this unorthodox variegation, this Socialism-with-holes-in-it or 'Sponge Communism', as it came to be called, seemed to suit the variegated English character and the peculiar English scene in general; it gave a general sense of fair-do's all round, of efficiently organized team-work, and a common end worth working for. In short, it brought contentment to the vast

majority of the people and a will to work that has once again made our industries pre-eminent in the world.

1982. It is generally and generously admitted by the other States of United Europe that the prestige of England, with a present population of little more than twenty million, is due chiefly to the character of her people. Since the 'deflation' of the population began in response to the great 'quality not quantity' campaign, 'the foreign exchange value' of the English had steadily increased as against those countries less careful in the vital matter of citizen-production. Over half a century of enlightened and really effective town and country planning had gone a long way to remove or mitigate the welter of disfigurements left by the feckless Georgians, who regarded as so much sentimental nonsense the warnings of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (a far-sighted propagandist body founded in the 'twenties that dissolved a generation ago, its mission fulfilled). A surprising result of the regeneration of agriculture and the rehabilitation of country life was that the recovered loveliness of the countryside was not – as in the towns – some new beauty that might have been expected to result from a new way of life, but something strangely familiar, something very like the beauty of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries – the England of the Four Georges. The population had returned to manageable proportions and the age of great estates had also returned – the State Collective Farms – the People's Property. In many cases the capital mansion houses of the old estates had become the headquarters of the new units, while the return of a civilized regard for the true and abiding amenities and graces of country life had not only recaptured the gracious charm traditionally associated with the heyday of private ownership, but had also added much new beauty undreamt of in the philosophy of the squires. The best of them, if they could return to-day, would, I think, find little to distress them, for, above everything, they loved their land, and that is being nobly done by.

From Rural Scotland *

by the Duke of Montrose and Joseph Duncan, Secretary of the Scottish Farm Servants' Union

OUR Weather. It is dominie James Buchanan who keeps the school rain gauge, and wee Erchie, the dux of the school helps him. Just as the cloak of Elijah fell on Elisha, so, benefiting by the wisdom of the dominie, Erchie has come to be recognized as the school weather prophet and professor. Erchie says that on January 2 and 3 of this year we had a rainfall of 3.14 inches; and then to rub it into his class-mates he explains that if all the heavenly water that fell on those two days in the glen (which is 39,000 acres in extent) was collected into the minister's glebe (which is two acres) there would be a loch 3,925 feet deep, and if that loch were frozen into a solid block of ice it would reach to within 150 feet of the top of Ben Nevis (4,266 feet high). My! he is gey gleg in the uptak is wee Erchie the dux.

As a matter of fact this rainfall, heavy though it is, is by no means a record for Scotland. One of the heaviest downpours known was that which occurred between 5 a.m. on August 3, and 5 a.m., August 4, 1829, in Morayshire. There they had 3¾ inches in the 24 hours. Indeed they had 7.36 inches that month and suffered one of the worst floods ever known. The heaviest rainfall does not always cause the worst flood. Much depends on the state of saturation of the soil previously. In October 1827 they had in Morayshire nearly the same rainfall; it was 7.13 inches but the floods were then nothing like the same as in August 1829 when there had been a perpetually wet July.

One of the crofters in describing his experiences of that dreadful night said: 'We pat the wife an' her bit wean and the

* This will be, we trust, a regular feature. We shall also be glad to receive from Wales and Ireland notes of ideas, tendencies and occurrences the significance of which may be missed by the daily press. – *Editor*

bairnies into the bed and the rest got up on to the kists and tables. We pat the girdle on the crook i' the lum an' stuck the lamp on the wa'. But the water soon drooned oot the fire an' rose i' the bed. We then pat twa chairs i' the bed, an' pat a door atween the twa chair backs, and set the wife an' the wee anes aboon that. But the water it raise and raise till aboot twa o'clock o' the morn, when it drooned oot the lamp and left us a' i' the dark. In trowth it was an' awesome nicht yon, what wi' the roar an' ragin' o' the water, the howlin' o' the win', and the blattering o' the rain without, and the greetin' o' the wife an' bairns within. A' the kists an' brods were floatin aboot, an' a basket o' linen went oot o' the windie foreby an' aye whammled afore oor een. Aye, we was a' on the brink o' Eternity yon awfu' nicht'.

In the Isle of Arran we have a yearly rainfall of over 60 inches. It has more than once been as high as 80 inches, but because the steep hills slope straight into the sea like the roof of a house there is no flooding. In Stirlingshire and the middle counties there are 40 inches a year, and the Carse certainly 'gets saft'. But away on the East Coast in North Berwick and Nairn 23 to 27 inches will cover the annual rainfall and so they can and do.

> Gowf – an' gowf a' the day,
> Dae'n nothing whatever ava,
> But runnin' aboot wi' a bag o' sticks,
> Efter a wee bit ba'.

Wild Goats. I was discussing wild animals with Geordie, my byreman, when he said, 'Yon ramstam camsteerie deevil frae India is no the on'y body as haes goat's milk tae his parritch'. As a matter of fact, I believe the Mahatma Gandhi never took porridge, confining himself solely to fruit and goat's milk, a beverage which is undoubtedly very rich and sustaining. In Scotland we have had herds of goats and wild goats for many generations, but a clear answer has never been found to the question, 'What is a wild goat?' Between years 1600–1700 droves of goats used to pass

through Ross and Sutherland and Caithness regularly, many beasts being sold to the cottars as the herds moved along. Some of these animals escaped from time to time and became wild such as those on Ben Venue, on Slochd or at Flichity, and their descendants of to-day are erroneously called wild goats. Undoubtedly there is a genuine wild goat, as there are genuine wild cattle, like those at Cadzow Park in Scotland or at Chillingham in Northumberland. These real wild goats are pure white and can only be seen now in one or two places such as on Creag Mhor, on Ailsa Craig or on the Holy Isle near Arran. The skin of the real wild goat is much sought after for use as an apron for the big drummer of a Highland Regiment. Like the blackcock's tail in the piper's bonnet, it gives distinction and a national atmosphere.

These Country Dances. Have you ever battled your way through a 'Meg Merrilees', or nearly been flung off your feet in 'Rory o' More', or collapsed on a seat after twenty minutes of 'Strip the Willow'? If you have you will know the beauty and the happiness, not to mention the physical benefit of belonging to a Country Dance Class. We have quite a lot of these classes in Scotland, and Lord James Stewart Murray is the energetic president of the movement. Classes are got together anywhere, and competent instructors or instructresses to teach the proper movements are provided by a central organization. Branches flourish in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth and Stirling, and dances have been held in many a neighbouring village. Ladies and gentlemen, the right side of forty and the wrong, battle together through the mazes of 'Jenny cam doon tae Jock', 'The Fight about the Fireside', 'The Eight Men of Moidart' or 'The rock an' the wee pickle tow'. These square dances, or processional dances, certainly offer a splendid change from the two-step, the waltz or the reel. I have seen a programme with eighteen different dances on it, and the variety did not detract in any way from the pleasure of the evening. On the whole these dance clubs give a lot of fun, and elderly persons with a spark

of life in them get an opportunity of joining with the younger members of the community on festive occasions. The country dance class movement deserves encouragement in all rural districts, and it helps to preserve ideas and customs.–*M.*

THAT 'Decay of the Scots Tongue'. The truth is that Scots is little used nowadays except among the older people and in the more remote districts. It has been kept most alive in the North East, where one hears the old words used, but even there it is losing its grip. I do not see any way in which it can be kept alive if people don't feel it necessary. All these efforts to keep Gaelic from dying, to galvanize Irish into a semblance of life, and to make folks hot and bothered about the decay of Scots, leave me yawning. I speak Buchan with Buchan folk, and a mongrel Scots with older folk who will feel more at ease with me because I speak the vernacular. I find it much easier to speak English (or as near that as I can) to younger people, few of whom have any real understanding of Scots. Since the purpose of speech or writing is to make ourselves understood, the more we use a common language the less likelihood there is of misunderstanding. Those of us who know Scots are naturally sorry that it should disappear. We feel that the world will be a much poorer place because it will no longer use the words and accents which convey emotions to us no other words can do, but the folk who have never used these words lose nothing. They will miss much of the few good poets Scotland has produced as we miss much of Chaucer and Dunbar. But they will be no more able to help themselves than we are. A language must be a living thing of daily use; if it is not that, it becomes a cult and that mostly ends in cant. I doubt if the vernacular is suffering so much at the hands of the schools. They have Scots readers and Scots anthologies. Tom Henderson has one just out which is going into the schools – 'A Scots Garland'. You can hear the youngsters speaking Scots verse in most melting accents–

although few of them have any real understanding of the words. What is worth while in Scots verse will live until people can no longer read it and that is true of Chaucer and the earlier poets. The scholars will go on reviving it as long as it is worth while doing so and that is all the immortality we can hope for anything. – *J.F.D.*

The Premier's Pupils

MR. Ramsay MacDonald has done something for farming. Boys whom he taught years ago in the small school of Drainie, near Lossiemouth, have become farmers of whom Morayshire is proud. The farm of Muirton – four hundred acres of the flat rich Laich of Moray soil – where the Prime Minister as a lad gathered potatoes, now belongs to a farmer whom Ramsay MacDonald taught. William Mustard remembers MacDonald's dogged advance from dux of the school to pupil-teacher. He spent all his hours working for what, Mustard believes, he was not then clear about, except that it was to get on. He drove his pupils with his own passion. And the headmaster, a man of vision, though often hard put to it with toothache, did everything he could for him. Mustard recalls with a certain satisfaction that his pupil-teacher had no power to use the leather strap, the famous tawse, without permission from the dominie. When the Prime Minister visited Morayshire and awarded the prizes at the Moray ploughing match, it was Mustard's foreman who took the chief prize. 'I've made a good farmer of you, Willie,' MacDonald remarked. 'Do you know I taught your man for three years?' asked the Prime Minister of another farmer's wife. 'Have I made a good job of him?' 'A good enough farmer, no doubt,' replied the canny lady. – *I.M.*

The ninth instalment of 'An 18th Century Parson-Farmer, the Diary of Benjamin Rogers', *will appear in our next issue.*

The Garden and Orchard

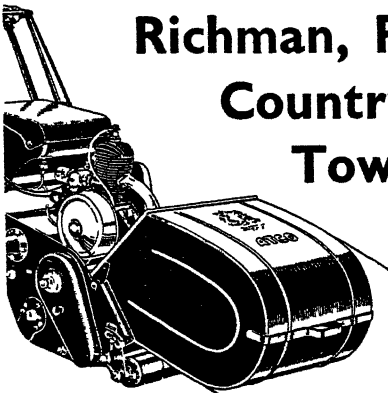
A New Bulb from Abyssinia

HERE in Western Abyssinia we have, at 6000 feet altitude, a climate like a perpetual English summer. Hence I have an English garden full of English flowers, grown from seeds from English seedsmen. As the climate is too good some of the flowers like Primroses, Polyanthus, and Hollyhocks just grow for ever but never blossom; flowers like Nasturtiums, Clarkia Elegans, Godetia, Statice, Eschscholtzia, Dahlias, Larkspur, Cornflowers, etc., run riot and bloom for ever. I have had a bush apple which has had



THE NEW GLADIOLUS

Richman, Poorman, Countryman, Townsman . .



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flowers and fruit at the same time every month in the year for twelve months. The wild flowers are marvellous; not modest shy little English hedgerow flowers but flaming shrubs. I have discovered and enclose a snap of a new bulb which I have sent to England to be tested. It is of the Gladiolus type and the plant grows in clumps with gladiolus shaped leaves, 4ft. 6ins. tall; the flowers – 4 inches across – on long white stems 5 inches from the stalk in a row of about a dozen, waxy white with purple throat; the flowers of a peculiar shape 4 inches across. I am trying to introduce various Abyssinian annuals and shrubs into England which would do well in a cool house and many annuals which would bloom out of doors. – *G V. Erskine, Gore, Abyssinia*

Someone Else's Garden

NOT yet has the summer season begun when private gardens are opened to the public, and when we plan ordered afternoons for driving to see what the centuries have bequeathed us, or what hints we can gather from modern knowledge and the experience of the collector. But there come opportunities at any time of the year for visiting the gardens of friends, for comparing them with our own, and learning what lessons we may of ambition or contentment. I have just returned from such a visit to one of the great gardens of England – in some ways I think I might call it the greatest, for its unique plants, the bold initiative of its successive owners, and the immense area and opening of its experiments – and I have come back to walk round my own. Here I am at home, then, having wandered for hours in this English paradise, and having looked at trees and shrubs and plants that I can never grow – and what is my outlook, who would like to be able to grow them? I have looked at hundreds of rhododendrons of which the names are in no nurseryman's catalogue. I have seen rows and rows of hybrid seedlings which have not yet flowered, and of which the colour and form of the flower can only be guessed. I have

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stared at lists and labels of plants collected from the seeds of the earth to bloom for the first time in these Sussex acres. And, perhaps more disturbing to the quiet of a gardener's mind than anything else, I have gazed at the blossom of shrubs which I might even now possess in my own garden, had I had the knowledge and foresight to have planted them years ago. Parrotia Persica, for instance, is no doubt not difficult to grow, but I have never planted it, and I have been pulling down the branches of a tall tree to look with envy at its brown-hooded crimson and white blossoms. And Lycopsis Sinensis, too, which must be a relation of Parrotia, but is an evergreen shrub, with lovely blooms of a different shade; and Prunus Pissardii Hessei, and Nuttalia Fruticosa – why did I not plant these years ago, to fill me with the delight of their white flowers in February? I can plant them now, doubtless, but I shall not see such shrubs with such wealth of growth in my garden in my lifetime. And yet – I am content. We all are, I believe, when we come back from our neighbours' gardens to our own. For what we really care for, what we truly love, are the plants which are our own, which we can watch, which are friendly to us day after day instead of acquaintances for an hour. In this wonderful Sussex garden where I have been wandering there is, for instance, a large bed of scree and rubble in which are growing I do not know how many strange and beautiful plants brought from the Andes. Among them is a large group of Triptilion Spinosum, loveliest of blue alpines. I marvelled as I caught sight of that green bed of promise. But I have a single plant of Triptilion of my own. It was given me by the owner of that bed of scree, and it is the chief treasure of my rock garden. I prefer it to his. I can watch it day by day – hour by hour, for that matter. And in its green vigour, with the buds that I can see are coming, it sums up in itself the happy text of my garden – of everybody's own garden. *Ille terrarum mihi praeter omnes Angulus ridet.* That corner of the world smiles for me beyond all the rest, and it always will.– *E.P.*

MEMS FOR MEN!

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Clean Fruit

I HAVE written before upon the lamentable waste of apples and pears caused by the scab fungus which so disfigures and cracks fruit. Apart from the removal and burning of all dead shoots, the most necessary step is spraying or dusting at blossom time. The reason for such treatment is that the black spots on apples and pears are due to a fungus, and the minute spores or seeds of this settle on the young fruit and leaves even before the blossoms are open. Without water, however, these spores cannot begin to grow. Two methods are therefore open to us; one, to keep the young leaves and fruits quite dry, not very possible except in trees on walls, and secondly to coat the leaves and fruit with a thin layer of some chemical which will keep the fungus from settling down and growing. Of these substances lime and sulphur are among the best to use, either combined in a liquid or blown on as a dust. Whichever is used, the first application must be made before the flowers open and the right moment is when the young buds are just turning pink (in the case of apples) and when the cluster of buds opens out so that each bud stands well apart from the others enabling the fluid or dust to penetrate around the base of each flower. The second application must be made as soon as the petals have fallen, and in a dry May this usually suffices. In a wet spring, such as that of last year, the after-blossom treatment must be repeated several times. Those growers in Kent who sprayed or dusted seven times were well rewarded with a crop of clean fruit in a year of scrubby and spotted apples. The amount of moisture during, and a month after, blossom time seems to be the critical factor, for, in a dry spring, clean apples are the rule, whether sprayed or not. The lime and sulphur liquid which is sold ready made is the safest to use, and directions are given by the vendors as to the necessary dilution. Dusting is more modern, and it is particularly suitable for small gardens. As the dust is light, no mixing (and possible error) is required. The powder is usually a very

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fine grade of green sulphur, and if nicotine is added it will kill any insects such as caterpillars, aphis and apple suckers, which will probably be present at the same time. The dusting process also is excellent for killing green fly and I much prefer it for this purpose to the use of liquids and for such summer troubles as mildew on roses, rust on hollyhocks. Currants and gooseberries can be treated in the same way, so that the investment of a few shillings in a blower will not be for the fruit alone. The most practical blower is like a small syringe, which carries at its mouth a small tin containing the powder. The weight, with powder, is under 2 lbs. so that the work of dusting is much lighter than that of spraying and the absence of liquid makes it a cleaner process. – *E.A.B.*

Alexander's 'Piece of Paper'

by Salfario

NO one ever called him Alec. He was dignified, a little stern, and did not invite familiarity. As a Water Bailiff he had a very proper sense of duty to his Conservators. His hours were all hours of the day and night, more especially when salmon were on the move. He knew instinctively whether a man was trying to catch smolts or was hooking them whether he would or not. He knew the run of a kelt as soon as it was hooked. He was a good friend to all fair and honest sportsmen – he was almost Alec to them. To all others he was severely Alexander. Nothing made him happier than to see an angler get a fish well and truly hooked always provided he had his 'piece of paper', which was Alexander's way of describing the Conservancy licence. Anything in the way of snatching or foul-hooking fish was not tolerated. Above all else, Alexander had a big and kindly heart.

It is a great business to take a salmon on trout tackle. As a boy I did it and was able to land and keep the fish – thanks to Alexander. On this border river, where Alexander ruled, there were always a few fish running at Easter. I was

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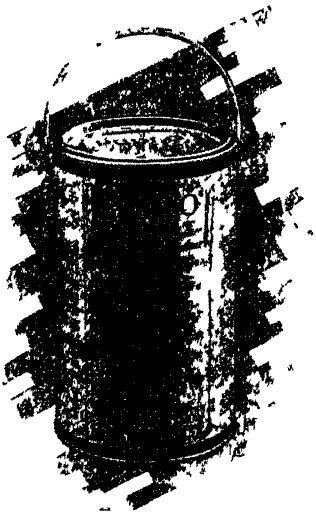
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home from school, and on a fair and favourable Easter Monday morning hooked a salmon to a March Brown. The river being fairly full I had on big trout flies and was using a 2 x cast. When the battle was well under way Alexander appeared. That, to me, was unfortunate, I thought, because I had no salmon licence. However, I was determined to land that fish whatever happened to it afterwards. Alexander, on the gravel bed behind me kept silence for some time and then ventured to remark 'That'll be a clean fish ye're runnin' Sir'. I said that it certainly seemed to be. A while afterwards came the suggestion, 'Ye'd be playin' him nicely from the gravel bed the noo'. So I came out of the water. For some minutes I was conscious that Alexander was standing very close behind me as there were grunts and growls from him at every awkward movement of the salmon. At last he suggested I could 'worrk him into the wee bay and gie a body a chance to tail him' – for I had no gaff. To the bay that salmon came and was tailed in the most expert fashion by Alexander. Without comment and to my complete astonishment he promptly dispatched the bonny fish with a sharp blow from a handy stone. 'A nice cock fish,' says Alexander, 'maybe ten pounds weight; if ye dinna mind, Sir, a'll just tak a glance at yere piece o' paper which ye'll find in yere right haund coat pocket.' There was a shade of emphasis on the latter part of this remark almost amounting to command. Dazed and somewhat breathless I fumbled in my pocket, produced the licence, and handed it to Alexander. He put on his glasses and with great deliberation gave the licence a careful scrutiny, handed it back to me and said, 'I'm thinking it was fortunate I was passin' when ye hookit that fish'. Before I could reply he stalked up the bank and was out of sight almost in a moment. When I told my father about the 'piece of paper' he remarked significantly that no doubt he would be seeing Alexander one day soon. Alexander called to see him that very evening and, so I was told, made some nice remarks about my handling of a certain fish.

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*Running a Small Country Hotel**

Two Years' Experience, by J. B. Pennefather

THE Crown and Thistle is typical of hundreds of small hotels scattered about England in small country towns or large villages, which rely for their trade chiefly on motorists, tourists or holiday visitors, and form the mass of the houses classified by the R.A.C. and A.A. as one, two, or sometimes three-star hotels. It is the English country inn which is so frequently the target for abuse and complaint. Perhaps our two years' experience of innkeeping (of which we knew nothing when we started) may shed some light on the difficulties. My last seven years in business – as a grain importer – had been spent in Genoa, and at first my wife and I thought of starting an hotel on the French side of Ventimiglia. We finally bought the Crown and Thistle at Abingdon-on-Thames, a posting house, dating from 1605, which was in a sad mess in every way. There was practically no connection or goodwill, except for a few commercial travellers, with their interminable steaks, chops and fillets of plaice. Our bar is separated from the hotel proper by the arched entrance to the courtyard; our whole energies have been devoted to the provision of well cooked and interesting food and of comfortable and pleasant rooms. I remember well the horror felt by us when our first chambermaid expressed her astonishment at sending to the laundry sheets that had only been used for one night. 'We always just damp them and put them through the mangle.' Difficult as it may be to believe, this practice appears to be by no means uncommon in what are otherwise quite respectable hotels, as three different maids told us the same thing. We could save between £20 and £30 a year if we chose to follow the practice. The cost of the laundry alone for one

*See also 'What Hotel Can One Go to?' page 215 and 'Folk Cookery, Sense and Nonsense', page 201. Also 'How I turned Inn-keeper' in THE COUNTRYMAN for April, July and October, 1931.



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night (sheets, pillow-case, towels, napkin, etc.) is just over a shilling per head.

There is no accounting for tastes and no two visitors are alike. Some desire two pillows, others none; some like lots of blankets even in summer, others cannot stand the sight of an eiderdown; some like soft beds, others hard. One visitor complained bitterly after his first night that he couldn't sleep a wink – the bed was awful. Much perturbed we asked what was wrong and discovered that it was too soft! Next morning the remedy – a hard straw palliasse excavated from our 'junk' room – was warmly approved. One essential is hot water at all hours. This means constant attention and no little expense, a fact frequently lost sight of by hard-bargaining clients who want reduced prices, but would be loud in their complaints if the bath-water were tepid. One of the weakest points about most English hotels is the welcome offered to the guest. On the Continent, as a rule, you are made to feel that the whole establishment has been created expressly in order to be able to receive you on the particular day of your arrival – smiling proprietor, bowing *maître d'hotel* and so on. At home, only too frequently, the new arrival is given the number of his room and sent upstairs with the 'boots'. If my inn were in France I should like it to be known as *l'auberge du bon accueil*. Every arrival is attended to by one of us, shown to his room, asked if everything is to his satisfaction and if anything is wanted. Having done all we can to make him feel at home and explained the whereabouts of the bathrooms, sitting and dining rooms, we leave him to do as he pleases, as if indeed he were in his own house. Often, however, our cheerful welcome has been damped by the glum unresponsiveness of the guest.

I have the advantage of having learnt to appreciate the good points in French, Italian, Swiss, American, and even Argentine cooking. In a small establishment, with limited cooking facilities, it is unreasonable for a visitor to expect



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à la carte service, especially while a table d'hôte lunch or dinner is in progress; the dinner menu also requires careful planning so that the cook (who generally does the carving and the service of dishes to the waitress) will have time to attend to this at the proper moment and not have to look after delicate dishes still being cooked. Better a fairly simple dinner all well cooked, with perhaps a special dish to give it interest, than a series of more pretentious efforts all just failing to be successful. Most inn-keepers probably provide what is demanded by the majority of their patrons. One night when we had quite a decent dinner – Spaghetti al pomodoro, Oeufs Berny, Boeuf au Vin, Apple Turnover, Cheese and Biscuits – some guests asked if we hadn't cold beef and pickles. There didn't happen to be any cold beef and they allowed themselves to be persuaded to try the Boeuf au Vin; the result was a request for a liberal second helping. After two years' experience I have certainly found that it is no use providing anything out of the ordinary for lunch – at least on weekdays. All that the average motorist or passer-by wants is the hackneyed 'joint and two veg., sweets and cheese', with sometimes soup to start off with. The 'cheese and fruit' suggested by Monsieur Boulestin in his first-rate little book as the usual finish of a sweet-less luncheon, would certainly satisfy few of the normal midday clients, though this is the almost invariable rule on the Continent and I personally would ask for nothing better. There should be in any case fruit always available for breakfast or any other meal. If a discriminating guest comes along to lunch, it is easy to offer an omelette or other egg dish to start with, and substitute, say bananes au rhum, a soufflé, mousse au chocolat or zabaglione for the more ordinary sweet figuring on the menu. Why is it that so many English people condemn offhand any foreign dishes, and why do others run down all English cooking? Is there not a golden mean with selections of good simple dishes from abroad to pies, tarts and puddings with which we are perhaps only too

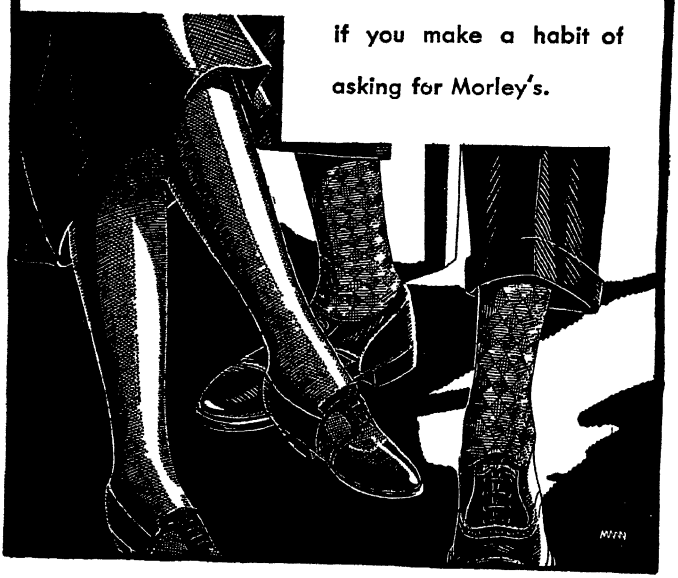
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familiar? I have found that for dinner a menu with one or two non-standard dishes will be acceptable to most people, and will be genuinely appreciated by many. I have often had to persuade some newcomer not to refuse the spaghetti; nearly always we make a convert. I have reached the conclusion that not one in ten diners has any knowledge of wine. He simply goes by the price of the bottle. When drawing up our modest wine list I foolishly determined to price everything very reasonably; I am now quite convinced that my sales would increase if I added even 50 per cent to the present figures. One brand of champagne, for instance, is priced at 17*s.* 6*d.*, the identical brand and year is sold not ten miles away at 25*s.* 6*d.* One aspect of innkeeping that has disturbed us not a little from time to time is the extraordinary lack of consideration shown by many people. Furniture, carpets, wallpapers and everything else in the hotel will receive from them little or no care. How often do people think of reporting breakages? Quite a lot of broken or damaged chairs, an old card table propped up on a book to conceal the broken foot, a Sheraton palm-stand hidden in a corner with one leg off, new hair brushes deliberately stolen from the lavatory, telephone calls not advised – these are some of the petty deceits that the innkeeper has to put up with. Only last night a charming couple stayed here and left this morning just after breakfast. They took the trouble to come and say goodbye to us and thank us for making them so comfortable – and now the chambermaid reports a cup of tea spilt all over the new silk eiderdown, and all my wife's efforts to remove the stain are useless. In the way of tips it is astounding how mean some people are.

During our first three months we served eighteen dinners (not counting commercial suppers); in the same months of the second year 229, and this year 484. 'Visitor nights' increased by 24 per cent in our second year, and total meals served by 22 per cent. I calculate that it will take at least four years to build up a satisfactory clientèle.

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And so on!

by Elspet Keith

THE Right Honourable Algernon John Mortimer Patten, fifth Earl of Forrest, had come into his 20,000 acres, early Tudor mansion, and other amenities, with the utmost good humour. His marriage to the daughter of a Duke when she was nineteen and he but three-and-twenty had been the only ripple in a life of happy social conformity. Two years after marriage the lady had broken her neck in the hunting field. Happily she had left an heir. In relieved bewilderment the widower had buried his wife's young loveliness under a gigantic tomb, but he did not forget his experience of ceaseless combat with the tough will of an implacable beauty. Not constancy but fear had kept his lordship unwed in after years.

Shortly after his wife's death Lord Forrest met Mr. James Nairne. This high-bred, very thin young man, with keen grey eyes and long supple hands, had a whimsical humour that his lordship found irresistible. He pondered how he might utilize the indolent Nairne's aesthetic and intellectual qualities. For long Nairne resisted his wiles. Nairne had no greed, envy or ambition, and responsibility irked him. In the end, sheer laziness brought him to Nunnholm Court, and there he stayed on and on. Sometimes he would look wonderingly round his snug, elegant quarters, gaze over the lawns and woodland that dipped to a silvery river bend, or walk round the fine library that his knowledge had saved from decay, and would ask himself dreamily, 'What keeps me here?'

Having secured his man, Lord Forrest went off from time to time yachting or big game hunting, leaving Nairne to the long delights of restoring the beauties of many-winged Nunnholm. With a gang of men outside and in, Nairne enjoyed eliminating, planning and renovating. On his lordship's return the two would go round the place arm in

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arm. All that Nairne had done would be enthusiastically approved, and the chorus was ever the same, 'We must leave it all in good order for the boy!'

Nairne had a deep interest in archaeology. One day he found a diary that had belonged to the second earl, a man of remarkable intelligence. In this diary there were clear directions about Roman remains in the Park. Pots, coins, weapons, tiles and other treasures were dug up and stored. Nairne arranged and classified the finds with exquisite care, and experts came to admire and envy.

On his return home his lordship looked ruefully at the site of a once velvety lawn, now a place of miry clay. Nairne had never known his friend so unappreciative. Even his plea for the value of the work to posterity brought but faint response. His lordship wanted to know what Nairne had written about it. Nairne had been gathering archaeological data for ten years. The excavations at the Park were timely. 'I tell you, my dear Algy,' he said, 'nothing so perfect, so complete, has ever been got together in so short a time; I am deeply indebted to you. Read what I say about you in my preface.' There was a long silence. Then his lordship said, 'I hope you won't mind, Jim, but I want to sign this book! My place, my money, my treasures and so on!' 'But you know nothing about archaeology,' said Nairne.

For an hour the two men talked, Nairne pacing the floor angrily, his lordship sitting obstinately sideways with his massive hand on Nairne's MS. To Nairne's sarcastic comments he would reiterate that no one had ever heard of James Nairne, whereas his own name was known all over the world. 'All these years you've written my speeches, letters to the papers and so on,' he said. 'I can't see any difference between that and letting me sign this book! I want to hand down something good to the boy. That's really all I care about.'

Suddenly Nairne sat down opposite his friend. 'Algy,' he

The way of a Countryman with his Dog



WE have heard of many reasons why the country dog is often in better condition than his brothers and sisters in the town—better food, fresher air, freer access to grass. But we have never yet heard anyone declare the true reason which, surely, is that the countryman is *quicker to recognize* loss of condition, and consequently has his dog back into condition before other dog-owners have fully realised that all is not well with their dog.

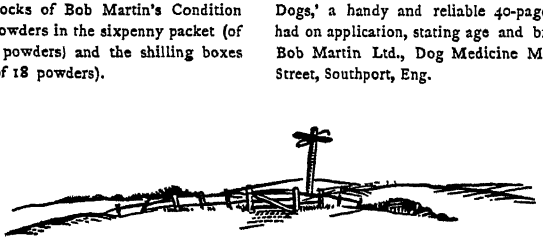
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said, 'have you ever thought that of your estates, your gardens, your great house, your library, your treasures – even your heir – not one item belongs to you alone. You know a Corot from a chromo-lithograph but not much more. Your gun is yours – for you have a sportsman's eye – and perhaps your horse and a dog or two. Yet such men as you have the deepest worldly wisdom. Your measure of intelligence gives you an uncanny power of appraising men for your advantage. It is a great gift.' 'You are a bit ungrateful Nairne,' said his victim wistfully. 'Yes, damned ungrateful,' said Nairne; 'you've given me wonderful grazing here for nearly twenty years. You had almost absorbed me. But not quite. There is this much left of me – this book. You shall not swallow that. I will remove the temptation!' And he picked it up.

Then Nairne laughed. 'How do you think the archaeological world will welcome you?' he asked. 'Most societies welcome earls,' was the quick reply; 'but you don't leave me much, old chap!' 'Yes, Algy, there are two subjects on which your opinion is worth the closest attention; just two – food and drink!' 'And perhaps friendship!' said his lordship in a low tone that trembled slightly. Nairne strode up and down again for some time. Then he stopped, 'Algy!' he said, 'once more you have beaten me. You have been a rare friend. Here you are! Take the damn'd book. It shall be yours for the boy's sake.'

'I WELL remember', writes an octogenarian reader, Mr. James Leakey, whose brochure is noticed elsewhere, 'with what skill my father, every morning before beginning to write, used to cut and slit his goose quill. Many a time has my mother described to me the flint and tinder used by her mother for kindling a light, and in my boyhood I remember how carefully my aunts would cut and fold into spills every bit of old letters, to save using more than one lucifer match a day.'

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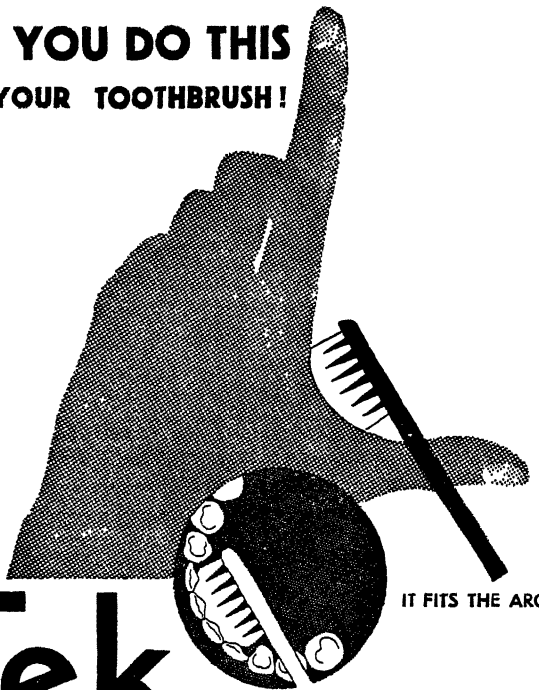
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Problems and Incidents of Bird Life

Can Nature Solve the Starling Problem?

BE the charges brought against the starling just or not, I feel sure that Nature, left to her own devices, would speedily take measures to check an overwhelming numerical increase. I have made careful observations throughout a considerable portion of certain of the North Midland, Eastern, and Southern English Counties, in which, as elsewhere, the starling has become extremely abundant. I have found that there has been a corresponding numerical increase of birds of prey, namely, barn and brown owls, kestrels, and sparrow-hawks. The trouble is that these natural checks are molested. In more than one locality, even the little merlin is more generally in evidence than a decade ago, when the species appeared practically to have vanished. I have seen a merlin pursue and seize a starling. The increase in the number of brown owls is specially notable. In one wood, a few miles from the house in which I am writing, as many as half a dozen have been found in the course of a morning. A bird watcher, keeping vigil at dusk, saw a brown owl seize a starling with skill. From a farm comes news of barn owls that hunt for starlings in the rick-yard. The owner of another farm recently said to me: 'I have noticed that since starlings began to breed so freely, there have been more owls about; mostly screech owls.' The screech owl, the white owl, and the barn owl are, of course, one and the same. There are sound reasons in support of the opinion that the long-eared owl also has shown an appreciable numerical increase within the last few years. That starlings form a large proportion of its food is well known. Half a dozen of these birds have been found, mostly decapitated, in the nest of a long-eared owl. I have known a pair of long-eared owls raid a starlings' nest and carry off parents, birds and nestlings. The kestrel usually seems to prefer rats, mice, voles, moles, and large insects rather than

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feathered quarry; but it has been observed to attack and kill birds up to the size of a wood-pigeon. Not seldom are starlings included in its list of victims. Oliver Pike describes a kestrel's capture of a starling. Not long ago, a kestrel was seen chasing a starling over the housetops along the entire length of a busy street. Indeed, in pursuit of starlings, the 'windhover' often enters large towns. The dashing flight of the sparrow-hawk admirably enables it to prey upon the starling. – *C. W. Greatorex, F.Z.S.*

The Crossbills in my Garden

FOR two years now in succession I have had crossbills through the winter in my garden, and I am more than ever in the dark about their movements and habits. I daresay that these may be regular enough in places where the birds have been long established, but in my part of the world, which is a corner of Surrey on the borders of Hampshire and Sussex, crossbills up till the last two years have been no more than casual winter visitors. They are more than mere visitors now, for they seem to be resident in large numbers through the winter, and in smaller numbers in spring, but I cannot understand their behaviour, which seems to me purposeless and inconsequent – though I have no doubt it is nothing of the kind. Last year several crossbills stayed with me through the winter, and a single pair remained until April. Whether these birds nested or not I do not know, but they remained in the garden until after their usual nesting time, which is February – March, and yet the hen seemed to be always with the cock and could hardly have been sitting. This year I have had crossbills in flocks, from October onwards, numbering from six or eight to as many as twenty. These flocks all through the winter frequented the garden, generally perching in the tops of larch trees, where they would remain feeding on the cones for perhaps a quarter of an hour at a time. They bit off immense numbers of cones, wrenching each cone from its twig, sometimes



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holding the cone against the bough with their feet and tearing at it with their strong curved beaks, sometimes aimlessly letting it fall without any attempt to feed from it. Under one larch I counted the cones lying in a square yard of ground scattered with them, and I calculated that in the morning the birds had wrenched off that single tree between 1500 and 2000. Sometimes a cockbird would seem to be singing and feeding, or climbing about examining cones at the same time. It is a pleasant song, something like a linnet's, but more varied. And always the visit of the flock ended in the same way, for no apparent reason, with a sudden unanimous twittering, the whole flock flying away over the larches to some other tree in the distance. In January I saw flocks of crossbills only on a few days early in the month. But there was at least one pair – there may have been more – which remained as a pair through February. Whether they were nesting I could not determine. In one respect they were constant in their habits. They are delightfully tame and fearless, and I have had five in a row, birch red cocks and olive-green hens, drinking three or four yards away from me from a pool in the rock garden. – *E.P.*

The Nightjar

THE sun had set on Egdon Heath. Suddenly a shadowy form, of which little could be seen but the long tail, floated across a patch of gorse. It might have been a gigantic moth, so silent was it; or an owl, so soft and strong; or even a rather stout swift, so long were the wings deliberately beating the air. It was a nightjar. The next morning I looked about among the heather, bracken, and gorse. At last, half hidden beneath the bare, blackened branches of an old gorse that had been burnt in some heath fire, I caught a glimpse of something that looked like a piece of lichen-covered bark. It was the female nightjar sitting with half-closed eyes, her grey feathers, barred with buff, brown and black, making her one with the earth. – *P.K.*

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The Country House Aeroplane

13. *Friends' Visits, by W. L. Everard, M.P.*

THE COUNTRYMAN is to be congratulated on its efforts on behalf of the 'Country House Aeroplane' over the last two years. The difficult times through which we are passing have undoubtedly checked the building of country house aerodromes. There are, however, many suitable sites in parks and adjacent fields where with little expense a suitable landing ground may be made. I am more convinced than ever that such a landing ground is a great acquisition to a country house. There is something very interesting in seeing an aeroplane land near one's house and wondering who is visiting you, and I have found that if your landing ground is licensed and marked on flying maps, friends will come from a hundred miles or more to see you for an hour or two, where otherwise it would be quite impossible for them to make the journey. Besides there is the knowledge that one may well be rendering very real assistance to either Air Force or civilian aircraft in emergency. Many times have aircraft, both service and civilian, made use of my aerodrome in cases of bad weather or breakdowns.

Lord Willoughby de Broke

TO people who are inclined to be sceptical about the value of the aeroplane in country house life may I quote my experience last summer, which was considered to be one of the worst we could have from a flying point of view? The engagements to which I refer were mostly arranged some time ahead, with no particular regard to carrying them out by air.

1. In May it was found necessary to visit two north-country race-meetings, on a Thursday and a Saturday, in order to see a horse of my own breeding run. I had also received an invitation to stay at a country house. I left my home in the Midlands at 10 o'clock on the Thursday morning and was in the house, some 120 miles away, in about an hour

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and a half, a journey which would have taken fully four hours by car and was quite impracticable by train. On the Saturday I flew on to the next race-meeting, left my machine at an aerodrome some five miles distant, and was home in under two hours from the last race, a considerable saving of time over a motor journey.

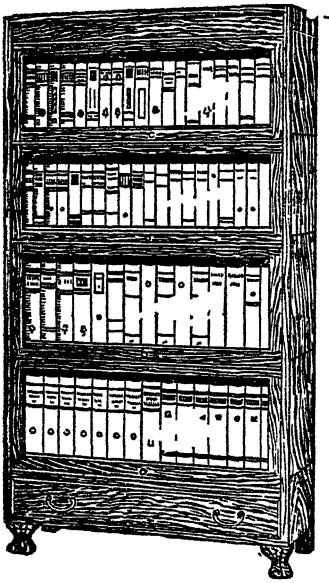
2. Some friends live on a delightful estate a few miles north of Carlisle. Visiting them, which it is my privilege to do three or four times a year, involves not only considerable expense but either a whole day or a night in the train. In June the aeroplane was called into service for a trip and accomplished it in 2¾ hours in the greatest comfort, and at a cost ridiculously low compared with that of train or car. A small field on a road two miles from my friends' house was used to land in; the return journey was accomplished a few days later with equal facility.

3. In August, use was made of the machine to visit a south country race-meeting where another home-bred horse was running. The journey was made in little over an hour as against nearly four hours which it would have taken by train or car. In this case a neighbouring aerodrome was used, but it was afterwards found possible to land on the race course; indeed a machine was parked there when we arrived.

4. The average traveller may think twice before embarking on a trip on the Continent, involving, as it does, worries about booking seats and tickets, and a hundred and one other details. But how easy does the trip become by air from one's own home! All that is necessary is a passport and a Customs *carnet* and the Continent is open at the shortest notice and whenever the spirit moves one. The only formality involved is that of clearing Customs in England at one of the recognized airports, such as Heston, Croydon or Lympne. Last Spring I found myself at Le Touquet in 2¼ hours' flying time from home, the prelude to a most interesting tour of 2400 miles in Central Europe, accomplished in 29 flying hours with no hitch of any kind.

These are only details of a few flights taken at random from my log-book. It is no exaggeration to say that anyone who has owned an aeroplane for a short time regards the air more and more as his normal means of transport. There will be occasions when he may be defeated by weather or by lack of a suitable landing ground. The former can largely be conquered by experience, and the latter both by experience and the fact that the number of grounds is greatly on the increase all over the country. My own experience has been that I have rarely had to abandon a flight owing to weather, and still more rarely owing to being unable to find a landing

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place, and I am only a beginner at the game. I feel lost when the use of the aeroplane is denied me during the few days of the annual overhaul.

The Honourable Lady Bailey, D.B.E.

IF a man or woman has a plane, a level open space, some Customs forms and some maps he or she can start out for Timbuctoo after breakfast any morning. I do congratulate you on your country-house aeroplane series.

The Master of Sempill

A REGULAR reader of THE COUNTRYMAN who always looks forward with pleasure to the arrival of the next number, I should like to congratulate you on all you are doing to further the cause of aviation. The use of the aeroplane by private persons is growing, though slowly, and the possibilities of air-taxi services are becoming recognized by business men; but if air travel is to develop it must be with the aid of those who own or control the land, and through the medium of THE COUNTRYMAN I should like to appeal to all those who are in a position to do so to assist in the development of landing grounds in the vicinity of towns and villages. This does not entail a great deal of work or expense. A large size level field providing a run of some 300–400 yards into the prevailing wind and not surrounded by high obstructions is all that is required for the average light aeroplane used in this country by private owners or for air-taxi work. The development of aviation is vital to our future.

Two starlings were found cowering beneath a table in the darkest corner of the hall, quivering with fright. On going upstairs to shut the landing window by which the birds had entered, a sparrowhawk was seen perched on the stair rail. – *M.G.D.A., Peebles*

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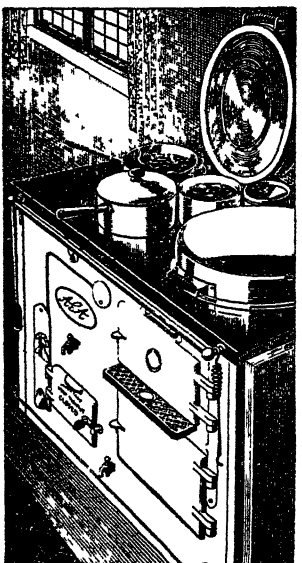
A Change of Heart?

HAVE you noticed a remarkable change in the countryman's feelings towards animal and natural life, a change for which the men who fought in the War have been mainly responsible? The country I have in mind is a fruit-growing area, and when the 'cherry-minding' season begins, it is the custom to slaughter all the birds that come to gun. Holocausts of as many as 500 birds a day are common over a few acres. A carter who was wounded in the War said to me: 'It be lovely when they be in vlour (the cherries), and there byunt nothen so nice as to hear they little birds a-chackleing and a-twittering and a-singing so sweet of a spring mornen. But as soon as they starts a-minding, some hunkid swine must start and try and blow oll they little birds to hell – why, you never hears 'em sing agen arter it'. I have so often heard a roomful of inn-mates condemn rook-shooting in the nesting season, bird-killing in the cherry season and all glaring ill-treatment of domesticated animals that I am inclined to believe callousness or insensibility to be growing exceptional. I heard one man who had been all through the Mesopotamian and Russian campaigns, and so must have been horror-tanned, say that shooting young rooks was like 'shooten we in our beds', and the room murmured approval.

The interesting thing is that this sentiment often extends beyond the animal kingdom to a semi-mystical attitude towards the trees and flowers. When, during the War, Pipney Benfield came home on leave, he said to his pal, 'I'll give your love to the old pear-tree'. When one of the younger farmers returned from the War, he inherited a beautiful woodland. This, with its primroses, bluebells and 'filbeards' (filberts), he threw open to all who chose to wander through it and pluck, and if they were children, he would add to the plunder, coppers, as he went his rounds on his nag. What galled him were the marauders from the towns who

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rooted up his bluebells and stripped his nut trees of their branches. He posted notices on the borders, but country week-enders went on sacking the wood. So he armed himself with a horsewhip, and when on his rounds, he met a party of urban fry loaded with spoils, he cracked his crop and drove them off. But it takes something more than brusquerie to put town-parties off their pillage. So he had to take his gun and shoot the tyres of these cits while they were away grubbing and smashing. Whereupon he was summoned. Appearing before the Bench, he told it that his wood was free to all the world but that what he would not stand was 'they —— making Hell out of it'. The court refused to convict our earth-warden, new style.

As to the old yokel he will fly into a passion if he sees a horse beaten or a dog kicked, but think nothing of 'touching up' with a 'shappick' (two-pronged fork) a cow that won't stand properly for milking, and find it amusing to see a pig with its throat half-cut running round and round in circles. Yet a man of this type nursed inside his waistcoat a family of young rabbits which had lost their doe, sitting up most of the night to feed them on milk. One of the older cherry-minders said to me: 'I sin an ole thrush on a tree yesday mornen, he was a-whistlin' beautiful, and he was a-havin' him one or two. So I said, "Ole man, you can whistle better ner I can" and so I let him go'. One of the older farmers who died last year left a charming will. He gave instructions that every April there should be laid upon his grave boughs of cherry, pear, plum and apple blossom. Likewise, the vicar, for a special fee of ten shillings, was to preach a sermon upon the godly excellence of orchards and how a bountiful God was manifest in the 'blowth' (blossom) not only for the bodies in the future fruit but for the souls of all good countrymen.

With so much gloomy rural news it is well to lay stress on one aspect of country life that is of promise for the future.
– *H. J. Massingham*

FLAVELS of LEAMINGTON

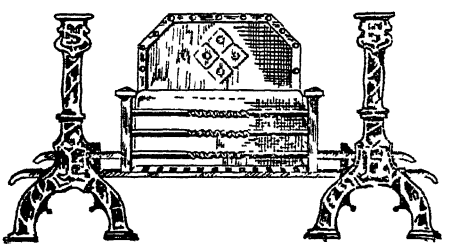
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The Butterflies from the Sea

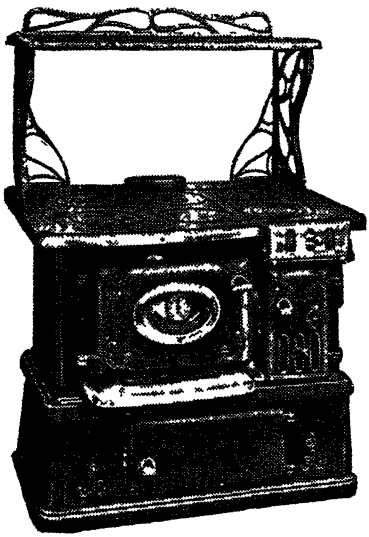
IN the early Spring of last year I was commissioned to collect the Channel Island butterflies for the Lord Rothschild collection. A series of each species was taken and in many instances proved most interesting in form. Many, the habit of which is to be double-brooded during the season, were sent to the 'butterfly farm' in Kent where the females were induced to lay their eggs in captivity and were reared on their food plant. They emerged as perfect insects and obviated the necessity of collecting one by one in a butterfly net the second brood as it became due in its season at Sark. This breeding of butterflies is the ideal way of making a collection, for with many species some of the minute scales on their wings are shed after their first flight, and the fringes round the extremities become damaged.

The cosmopolitan Painted Lady, V. cardui, flew up at my feet one sunless afternoon in May. Netting Painted Ladies provides the greatest sport, for they are one of the fastest flying species in the world. Only skill in stalking and quickness of wrist effects a capture. The migration of this species differs from that of the others that visit our shores. The Red Admirals come every year and usually a few Clouded Yellow butterflies. The Painted Ladies' last migration was in 1928. The Painted Lady is to many entomologists 'the Cosmopolitan': wherever butterflies are found, as far away as Klondike, where the summer season is merely a few weeks of thaw, to the dense tropical forests of Africa, India and South America, the Painted Lady may be found. And, unlike most species, its coloration and markings never vary.

The first really interesting butterfly we found was a female long-tailed blue L. boetica. It has been captured in the British Isles once or twice only during the last century. It is a very beautiful butterfly, rather like the purple hair-streak, T. quercus, in appearance and size. The wings of the female have been rather aptly described as the colour of a

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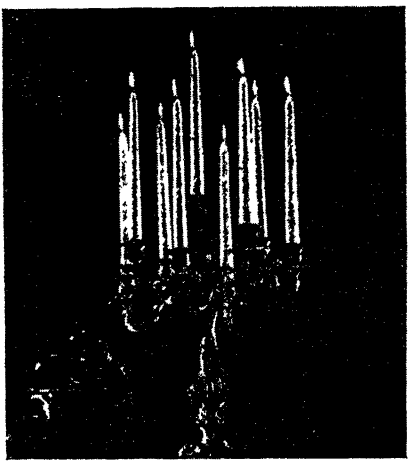
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ripening sloe. As the specimen I caught on May 31 was a female my friend, Major T. C. Hinks, of La Jaspellerie, kindly put his garden at my disposal and I succeeded in rearing a series of over fifty of the perfect insect.

Mr. Compton Mackenzie has described the large numbers of blue butterflies to be found on the island of Herm. I saw tens of thousands. They made one think of the large blue Brazilian butterflies that had such a vogue when mounted as jewellery. Flying about on the short cropped grass of the golf course, which was a carpet of yellow lotus, their colour showed to its fullest advantage. All across the common they were in droves, and even the famous shell beach attracted a number. On another day I visited the Isle of Jethou, with Mr. Compton Mackenzie's kind permission, and saw his wonderful terraced garden. The icheums which grew there were a great attraction for the humming bird hawks, S. stellatarum; they were flying up and down these columns of flowers, some of which must have been over twenty feet high.

A memorable day in Sark was June 4, when I witnessed a migration of the large white butterfly, P. brassicae, on an enormous scale. It was a perfect June morning with a fresh breeze blowing from the east which usually brings fine weather to these islands. I had joined a party for a picnic on the Bec du Nez which is the northern extremity of the main island. The whites were arriving when we reached our destination. Everyone remarked on it as it seemed so strange seeing groups of butterflies coming, as it were, from out of the sea, and, without pausing to feed from the flowers that grew on the cliff side, flying over our heads into the interior. As the day became warmer and the tide rose with a strengthening of the breeze, the butterflies came thicker and thicker. The east wind was blowing them from the French coast which was plainly visible, and they were landing all along the rocky coast-line. Being on the end of the island we could watch those 'flights' which overshot the length of the island and see them veer round and come up to the point in rather



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scattered formation, and so pass close to where we were sitting. Other butterflies came in small quantities with this white host – a few Clouded Yellows, many rather worn and faded Painted Ladies and quite a number of Small Whites. Some of these latter species did not seem to be so overcome with the 'migration urge', and alighted on the pink thrift blooms for some minutes to refresh themselves with honey after their flight across the Channel. When we left this part of the island at about six o'clock in the evening a few large white butterflies were still coming out of the void. Everyone will wonder what the islanders did for cabbages during the coming summer. Strangely enough, there was no plague of these butterflies in the later summer. Whether the balance of nature asserted itself by favouring the breeding of the parasites that prey on their species, or whether the females did not pause to lay many of their eggs before continuing their journey, is difficult to ascertain. The latter suggestion seems the more likely as very few caterpillars were seen on the cabbages. – *L. Hugh Newman*

Moles in their Runs

MOLES in a grass field may do little harm, for the earth thrown up in their heaps can be spread with a bush-harrow and perhaps can be regarded as a useful top dressing. But in a garden moles are an unmitigated nuisance and must be got rid of at all hazards. Even the kindest-hearted gardener cannot see his lawns made unsightly and his alpine plants ruined without some attempt to deal with the tiresome little black velvet burrower. But how persistent and how difficult to tackle moles can be! Not every skilled gardener can set a mole-trap, and no amateur will ever catch a mole. There are other methods of approaching the problem. Carbide placed in their runs is said to scare them away – I do not happen to have tried it. And before the War there used to be sold by certain nurserymen a sort of cone, made, I believe, somehow out of damp black gunpowder, which

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could be lighted in a run to smoke the creatures out. But I inquired for one of these the other day and could not find a firm that stocked such cones. I tried another method, but this was accidentally in a grass field where I happened to be standing with a gun. Moles throw up earth roughly every three hours, and when I saw a heap move I fired. This is a merciful way, but I should never have time to adopt it in a garden. Skilled trapping is probably best, and only a skilled man knows when to leave off. In a run which devastated part of my rock garden my gardener caught five moles, and I thought that must be all, but he set the trap for weeks longer in the run and caught two more. He could trace this run for a great distance, and I believe that most people have no idea how far a mole travels under ground. I never found the end of the run, but so far as I could measure, it goes for more than two hundred yards – how much farther I cannot guess. – *E.P.*

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The Hallowing of the Bells

A GREAT day in our village recently (writes a Bedfordshire vicar) was when the bishop came and hallowed the bells. Five of them had long been hallowed, having hung in the tower for hundreds of years, but this year we added a beautiful treble bell. We wanted to perpetuate the memory of our old schoolmaster. For thirty-seven years he had taught on weekdays and Sundays, and for twenty years he had been churchwarden. He was short of stature with a ruddy genial countenance and white hair and beard. He did not pretend to be a brilliant educationist, but he was always teaching, guiding and refining us by his simple goodness. When the village forefathers gradually put in bell after bell – they began in 1628 – they made a frame of massive oak – said to be one of the finest in the country – with six bell pits, and one pit was still vacant. And so what better memorial could there be for the schoolmaster than a new bell? The

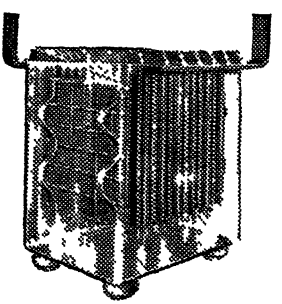
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'THE COUNTRYMAN,' Idbury, Kingham, Oxford

squire, the rural dean and the vicar went to see it cast at the old foundry (dating from 1570) in Whitechapel. Then a parishioner, our keenest young bell-ringer, went with a lorry and fetched it. How fine it looked! It was almost like silver, with a gold lining. It was placed in front of the lectern and adorned with rosemary and autumn blooms, and the vicar blessed it at Holy Communion. Then on the following Saturday comes my Lord Bishop and hallows all the work. The people sing:

Lifted gently to the steeple,
Let our bell be set on high:
There fulfil its daily mission,
Midway 'twixt the earth and sky.

During the ceremony the rope of the new bell was placed in the vicar's hands and he rang out the strokes of the Angelus. Then the ringers rang all the bells, and as the six notes struck in turn they seemed to reverberate the six-syllabled lines on the new bell:

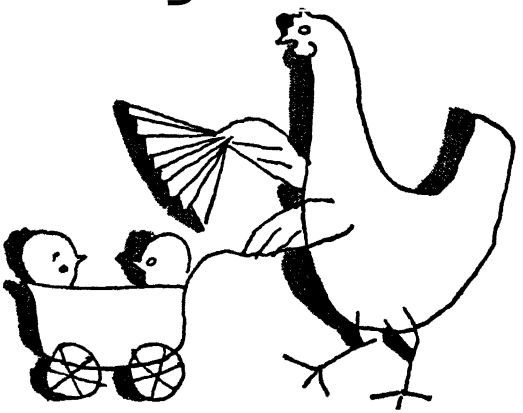
Youth, manhood, old age, past,
Come to thy God at last.

Have You Thought of This? – 1

IF you *must* save money in building your house, consider omitting the plaster throughout, except the bathroom and kitchen. You can distemper. The mortar must be 'struck' as the work goes up, not pointed.

INDEX AND TITLEPAGE. *This is now ready, more detailed than previously;* 1*s. post free. Binding charges are stated on page* 266. *Readers with broken sets are again warned that very few copies remain of previous issues of* THE COUNTRYMAN *We have evidence that bound volumes, containing as they do a vivid impression of country life, are likely to increase in value. The last two bound sets we have supplied have gone to America.*

Young chickens



must have a constant temperature

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THE BRITISH PARAFFIN

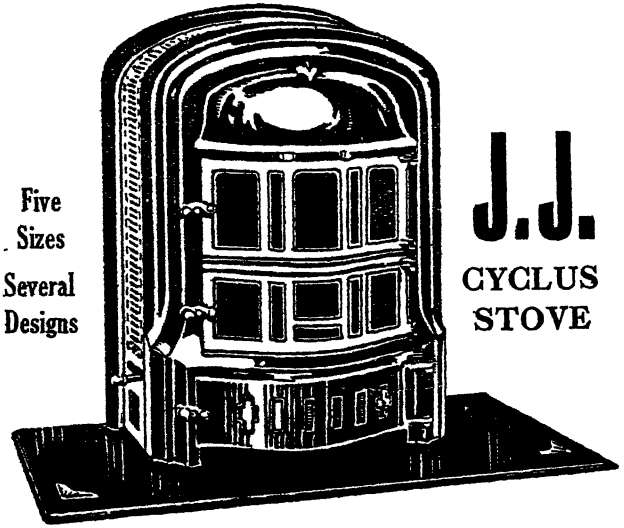
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Buying a Child's Pony

by Jean Tabor

A GRASS field, a little hay in hard weather, and attention to his feet, are all that a pony demands; five shillings a week will cover it. There are so many ponies to be had at the present time that it is simply a matter of selection. Their owners endeavour to dispose of them privately, partly because they like to know what sort of home their favourite is going to; largely, because a better price is usually to be obtained. In the shires, owners are asking £15 to £20 for a twelve-hand pony, but at Leicester known ponies, guaranteed, are fetching only £12 and under. A good pony should be obtainable for from £10 to £15. Children's hunters are in a different class. Buying locally saves transport. Another method is to buy a six-months-old pony from the droves at the fairs in the New Forest, Exmoor and elsewhere. These can be obtained for from five shillings to about five pounds. For people who can wait the necessary three years before breaking them there is no better way of buying, for the child grows up with the pony and one can guard from the beginning against any spoiling of manners. This question of manners is vital, for on them depends your child's nerve. Once let a child feel that his pony is too much for him and he may lose confidence. For this reason, the old pony is not always the right one. Age is no recommendation if the pony has been allowed to be master. Given the right old pony, his experience and patience are invaluable to his young owner. But it is a mistake to suppose that age is synonymous with good habits. Obviously, no pony should be bought without at least a week's trial. Do not be misled by a pedigree. While a well-bred pony is desirable for its shape and paces, the true thoroughbred is not suitable for any but exceptional children to handle. It is still usual to see children put on to ponies too wide for them. Narrow withers, well-sloped shoulders and strong round quarters, should be looked

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for. While the pony that tends to get his head right up is to be avoided, the pony that hangs his head and leans on his bridle will never give a child good hands nor pleasure. A pony's mouth, though it should not be too light, should never be hard. Unless parents are in a position to buy a succession of ponies to keep pace with a child's growth, it is best to make a child wait till he is ten or eleven before giving him a pony. We all tend to begin children, especially boys, too soon, long before they have the strength to control the quietest of ponies. In any case, a pony small enough for a child of eight to manage is going to be too small for him by the time he is ten. Generally speaking, it is best to wait till he is big enough to control a pony of from twelve to thirteen hands that will last him four or five years. Until he reaches this age it is an excellent plan to hire during the holidays. It gives one a useful line on the kind of pony one wants, and the child is gathering experience.

Local Government and Administration

Theatrical Licences for Village Halls and Schools

NOW that the longer days have come and most of the village entertainments have taken place the reminder may well be given that only a few of them were legal! All over the countryside there have been performances of plays in unlicensed premises, and quite a number of worthy men and women have exposed themselves to the risk of prosecution. A play is a play, and a school or a parish room is not a place licensed for the performance of plays. The right procedure is to apply to the magistrates for a licence for the building. The form (to be obtained from the clerk to the justices) must be filled up by the 'manager' of the building, say the chairman of the school managers or of the organization producing the plays. It provides for two sureties and must be countersigned by a magistrate. Applicant and sureties appear before the bench and enter into recognisances,

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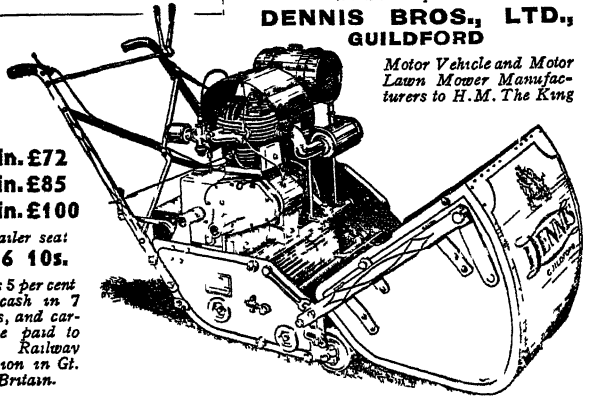
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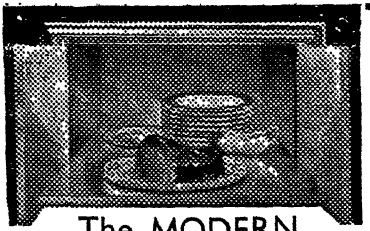
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the applicant in the sum of £10, and the sureties in the sum of £5 each to obey the regulations framed by the County Council. A nominal fee of a shilling may be charged for a licence if the plays are to be performed for charitable or public purposes. The most important regulation provides for the scenery, etc., being rendered non-inflammable, not such a difficult matter. In any case it is well to provide a fire extinguisher.

TICKLED by an announcement in an oversea paper that So-and-So is 'returning to England to lead the life of an English country gentleman', a reader writes, 'To-day if we see an English country gentleman in his car he is going to a committee meeting. If we don't see him in his car he is at a committee meeting. If by some fantastically exceptional chance we find him enjoying himself, then we know that he has cut a committee meeting'.

HOW many magistrates realize that when they sit as licensing justices they are 'clothed with a different status, charged with a wholly different duty and invested with very different powers and authority?' So asks Sir Alfred T. Davies, D.L., in a sixpenny pamphlet published by the Magistrates' Association. As justices at petty or quarter sessions, magistrates sit as a Court, 'and', he says, 'the less they know or have heard beforehand concerning a case the more likely they are to act judicially; in administering the licensing laws, magistrates do not sit as a court but as a licensing "meeting" or "special sessions" and the more they know in advance, by the evidence "of their own eyesight" (Lord Chancellor Herschell) concerning the neighbourhood, the premises, the licence-holder, and the trade he carries on, the better equipped they will be'. Sir Alfred lays particular stress on visitation of premises by justices either in pairs or as a small committee. As he has been a licensing justice for more than a quarter of a century and has been concerned as a solicitor or advocate in some of the most important licensing cases his counsel is valuable.



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Country House Catering – 9. *'Herb' and Flower Puddings*

by An Innkeeper's Daughter

EASTER ledges (Persicaria) is the name given in Westmorland and Cumberland to the Polygnum Bistorta which grows freely in moist places and appears about Easter. It is one of the principal ingredients of the famous herb puddings of the North, which, together with other herb dishes, are well worth preparing both for such hygienic attributes as they may possess and as a feature of economic catering. Herb puddings are eaten with the meat as a combination of vegetable and pudding. The herbs vary according to the cook's knowledge of those that may be used. I have several recipes handed down from generation to generation which are still in use somewhere or another in the North. In addition to the Easter ledges, a small portion of young nettles, the round stemmed variety, the leaves of the great bell-flower, and a few blades of chives, are picked over, well washed, chopped, but not too finely, blended with some groats of oats or barley, and boiled in a bag, tightly tied-up, for three hours, until the groats are cooked. The pudding is then turned out into a hot basin, a piece of butter, pepper, and salt mixed in with it – some people add the yolk or yolks of egg and serve as a great delicacy to eat with roast veal.

Mrs. Leyel gives an excellent recipe in 'The Modern Herbal' (Cape, 1931) in which both barley and oats are used. Both the latter are husked and crushed and soaked. These puddings belong to the same type as the frumenty made with broth and served with roast venison when Chaucer roamed in England. Another savoury pudding is the Shropshire 'grouty pudding', which is made with boiled grouts, mixed with currants, bound with egg, seasoned with salt, and boiled again in the same manner as pease pudding. It is finished off to perfection by being cut in slices and placed

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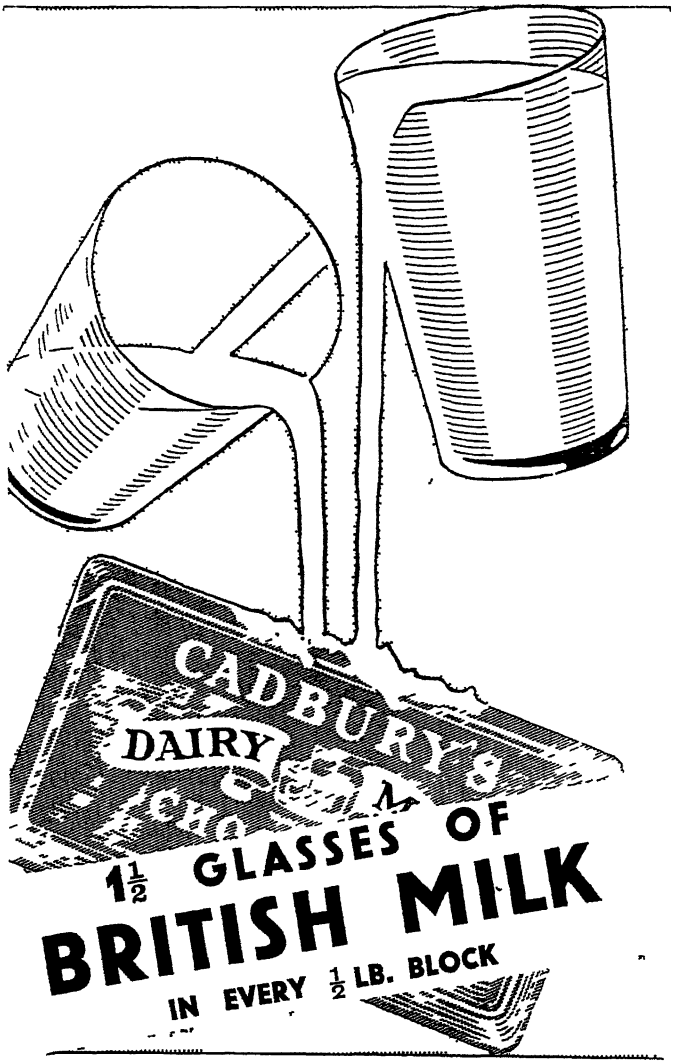
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under a roasting goose or gosling to receive the dripping for the space of one hour. It is described as 'something ecstatically good'.

At Easter time the petals of sweet wood violets, primroses and cowslips can with advantage be introduced into pudding-pies, which are simply custards baked in pie-crust. Archbishop Parker's black-letter cookery book, which is in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, has a very good recipe for one of these delicious puddings. The white bit of the petals, where they were attached to the flower stem must be nipped off. The crust in those days would be raised; to-day it would be a short crust used to line a deep fire-proof glass dish or pie plate. It is best to fill this with crumpled grease-proof paper and bake it first; then lift out the paper, make the custard, pour it in and put it into the oven to set. A good custard can be made with rice flour, eggs and milk, sweetened with sugar and flavoured with the flower petals. Or one can be made with cooked apple pulp, a little butter, sugar, and yolks of eggs, and flower petals.

Izaak Walton gives a receipt for making 'Minnow Tansies', in which minnows, eggs, and cowslips, primrose petals and a little tansy are mixed together and fried as a sort of pancake. In some cases we have a special use of the word tansy, applied to the type of dish as apart from the herb of this name. A tansy was apparently a herb or flower pancake, whether tansy juice was used or not. As a matter of fact tansy juice, although it is the least bitter of all the bitter herbs, is so bitter that it has to be used very sparingly. In the following we have an instance of a tansy made without the herb and one made with it, the method of making being the same in each case. One however is fried; the second is baked.

How to make a very good Tansie, 1676. 15 eggs but only 6 of the whites; beat well; put in some sugar and a little salt (or orange or lemon juice or both); add 1 pint or a little more of cream; beat again; then add the juice of spinach or primrose leaves to make it


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green. Then fry it in sweet butter; turn out on to a dish and strew with sugar.

A Curious Tansie, the New Way, 1706. 12 new-laid eggs beat up with 3 pints of cream, add the strained juice of endive, spinage, sorrel and tansie, of each 3 teaspoonfuls; ½ a grated nutmeg, 4 oz. fine sugar, a little salt, and rose-water, put it with a slight layer of butter under it into a shallow pewter-dish, and bake it in a moderately heated oven; scrape over it loaf sugar, sprinkle rose-water and serve it up.

These quantities are for a large household. Divide them by 6 and they will make a tansie sufficient for 2 or 3 persons.

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The Countryman's Wireless and Gramophone

LAST quarter I was talking about the tremendous improvement that can be made in a somewhat ancient wireless receiver by putting on a well-designed modern loudspeaker. Recently I have had a surprising illustration of what can be done by putting in new valves. It is astonishing, by the way, to find what a number of sets in the country are still using valves which are giving poor service. The other day I saw in an inn parlour a set of valves which were obsolete quite seven years ago, and there must be many more like them. It was a three-valve home-made instrument about four years old. On the lid there was a list of stations which had been received and the various dial markings. I was told that the list was now no use because the set would not receive the stations which it had originally received, in fact was only just capable of receiving two or three of the big British transmissions. As a matter of fact any set which is working reasonably well should have a far greater effective range to-day than four years ago, owing to the tremendous increase in power of Continental transmitters. The owner of the set in question seemed to think that he must expect a general deterioration of all components – much as in the case of a

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motor car or a tractor. On my suggestion he replaced his old valves with new valves of the same type but of slightly improved design, and we found that our list on the back of the lid could be nearly doubled! The point is that valve deterioration is so gradual that it is not usually noticeable. With the coming of longer days and summer conditions of reception a try-out of a new set of valves is well worth considering and may yield surprising results. Many instruments are still operating on six volt valves. When a valve change is being made, two volt valves will treble the time which an existing six volt accumulator (its connections changed from series to parallel) will last; that is another point which is not always realized. In addition, there are a number of output valves which have been designed recently which will give far higher performance, but with a greatly reduced drain on the H.T. battery.

I came across a rather troublesome fault the other day in a wireless set installed on a farm. It took the form of an extremely irritating crackle which, although not loud enough to obliterate the programme, was loud enough to spoil its entertainment value. We traced it to the fact that the aerial was swinging in the wind and occasionally touching the bough of a tree. It is a point well worth looking out for. The owner of this particular instrument had been to the Wireless Exhibition and had purchased an automatic record playing table which he had attached to his receiver. It is curious that these automatic record changers, which are complete with electrical pickup, motor and automatic apparatus, are so little known. Their attachment to an existing wireless receiver enables the owner to put on a half-hour programme of records and sit back and listen to them without further effort. The one I saw was an H M.V. Model 117 Playing Table, the cost, if I remember rightly, being 17 guineas. It was being bought, as most wireless instruments are being bought to-day, on an extended payment system. The instrument would take either 10 inch or 12

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inch records and operated without attention for upwards of half an hour, when it switched itself off automatically.

On the purely gramophone side, it should not be forgotten that it is possible to buy electrical pickups which can be attached to a wireless set and mount them on the tone-arm of any old gramophone, provided the motor is still good, so as to secure the benefit of electrical reproduction.

The Collector

13. *Coaching Prints as an Investment*

THE history of coaching is recorded in contemporary woodcuts, engravings and prints from the late seventeenth to the middle of the nineteenth century. The series begins with those curious examples of the time of Cromwell, continues with the fine engravings after Loggan, and a century later the coloured prints published by Carrington Bowles. Finally, in the reign of George IV, there are the splendid coloured prints by James Pollard showing the mail coaches which travelled so speedily a hundred years ago. Of these 'flying machines' the famous 'Quicksilver Mail' is still in being. It was seen as recently as June last year, at St. Pancras, en route by rail for the North. Pollard's prints have become exceedingly rare; they have been reproduced for so many years that even the reproductions have a certain antiquity. Even to-day, however, the collector may be lucky enough to secure an original at a country sale. The most coveted of the series is known by the title, 'North Country Mails at the Peacock, Islington'. This is a coloured aquatint measuring 21⅝ in. by 30⅞ in. It was engraved by T. Sutherland and published in 1823, by Watson, of Vere Street. Another example is called 'The Royal Mails Starting From the General Post Office London'. This is smaller. 'Approach to Christmas' is a wintry scene in which an East Anglian Coach laden with passengers, luggage, game and holly,

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Principal: EDGAR J. SAXON, F.R.S.A.

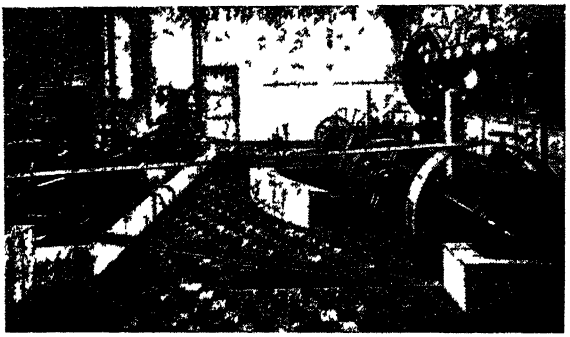
70—71 Welbeck Street, London, W.1

Telephones: Welbeck 8151, 8152

¶ Mr. Saxon is co author of 'The Complete Guide to Sound, Successful and Attractive Food Reform,' now in its eighth edition

¶ Associated with The Health Centre under Mr. Saxon's direction are: The Vitamin Café, 419 Oxford Street, W.1 (Ambassador 2111), and The Saxon School of Food Reform (cookery and food preparation), 46 Lancaster Gate, W.2 (Paddington [illegible]

forms the central feature of a procession of post chaises. The conventional scenery is that of Upper Street, Islington, in 1829, the whole effect being that of the outskirts of a country town. Two other important prints are named 'The Mail Coach in a Storm of Snow' and 'The Mail Coach in a Drift of Snow'. More rare examples of Pollard's skill include 'Breakfast at the Bull, Redbourn' and 'Recovering from the Cold'. 'The Cambridge Telegraph', 'Highgate Tunnel', and other scenes on the Great North Road are prized by collectors. Pollard's success brought forward imitators of his manner, but to their credit they produced new compositions. For example, the picture of the stage coach by Jones, engraved by Geo. Hunt, 'The Blenheim Leaving the Star Hotel, Oxford', by G. Havell, 'Under Weigh without a Pilot', by C. B. Newhouse, and 'Half Way' and 'The Opposition Coaches', both by C. C. Henderson. Finally, there are the prints published by Fores showing the St. Martin's summer of coaching, and the last Bedford Coach leaving the Swan at Bedford, by Rudge. These prints are triumphs of colour printing. Reproductions, often printed from the original plates, can be detected by the crudity of colouring. A fine original print of the 'North Country Mails at the Peacock' was sold recently for two hundred and fifty guineas for America. Those who possess Pollard engravings in the original frame are fortunate, the value of any specimen in fair condition rarely falling below thirty guineas. Far-seeing people began buying 'Pollards' many years before the present boom. This last Christmas, the writer secured two fine prints in their original frames for two pounds the pair; the auctioneer for once was caught napping. When Pollard prints were first sold, in the twenties and thirties of the last century, the prices ranged from five to ten guineas. At Thirsk the principal inn can show a small gallery of Pollard prints. At Ampthill there is a representative collection, and Mr. McNish, of Eaton Socon, has a print showing a Northern Coach passing along the Holloway Road.



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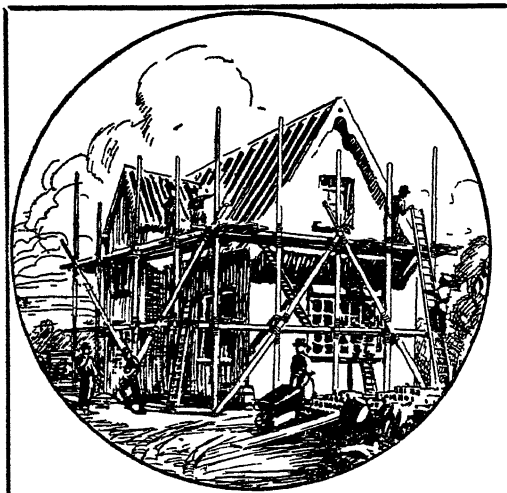
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The Letters of a Candid Architect

3. *Water*

THERE are countrified places in which a main supply is possible. Apart from such a company water supply, the village you have hit on may have some sort of a piped supply from a little reservoir filled by a ram or a windmill. If the source or system is already fully taxed, you might offer to increase catchment areas or extend retaining tanks to increase it. The local sanitary inspector will explain the situation. Perhaps you must be independent. Your land may have a watercourse emerging at a level thirty feet or so higher than the level of the position selected for your house. You should find the running water course, drive back into the earth till you get it clear and uncontaminated, and build, in bricks in cement, a well at least six feet deep and 2 ft. 6 ins. diameter, covered down with concrete. From this well run a half-inch galvanized iron or jointed earthenware pipe to a storage tank, of say 1,000 gallons, from which you will take your supply. Thus you will be served by gravity without machine pumping (which, by the way, may be by one sort of ram or another, by windmill or by a motor with a cable from your electric light outfit or the company's line). Normally you will sink a well. Don't be prejudiced. Geology and water divining appear to be opposed, but be wise and employ a diviner.* Take implicitly his guidance with regard to the presence of water. Take notice of his estimate of its strength and take with a pinch of salt his guess at the probable depth at which you will reach water. Water will percolate all permeable material such as sand until it reaches the retaining stratum of rock or clay. This is certain to have an irregular surface, so there is an underground system of watercourses. Your diviner will indicate

* The latest books are *The Modern Dowser: A Practical Guide* by Vicomte Henry de France, pp. 308, 16*s.* and *Water Diviners and their Methods*, by Henri Mager, pp. 308, illus. 16*s.*, both published by Bell



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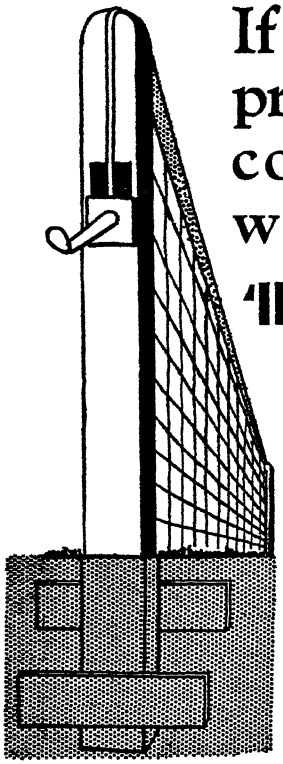
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a point over one or more of these lines. In an area of green sand at a considerable depth you may get a sort of lake or a subjugated Thames; then you will get water 'anywhere'. Make your well large enough to give you a good storage and build it in open brickwork sufficiently to allow for the flow of water. Above that build in bricks in cement or concrete tubes well puddled at the back with clay. If you use bricks, well bricks of 4½ in. thickness are stronger than ordinary bricks of 9in. thickness. Do not try to use ordinary bricks laid 4½ in. thick. It is not only courting further trouble, but is dangerous to the well-sinker if he builds on a drum.

The best position for the well may be in a part of the garden where an erection for the engine or dynamo would be an obstruction. Then construct a chamber below ground which will accommodate the plant. A manhole cover on top and step irons will make it accessible. A hole must be left in the top just over the line of the ram for the extraction of the rod in case of repairs. To ventilate this chamber, flues should be formed in the thickness of the walls and on opposite sides, one going to the floor, the other just under the ceiling. In times of frost these should be stopped, especially if there is a water-cooled engine. The pump must be placed within a distance of 25 feet of the water. It is usually fixed on two baulks of oak, built into the walls of the well and operated by a rod from the machine above. If you do not provide some permanent means of descending into the well (and very seldom is this done) place your manhole cover so that a ladder can be put down.

As to the tank in the roof space for storage of water pumped from the well, beware of frost. Case and pack the tanks and thoroughly wrap the pipes exposed to any unheated atmosphere. A novel way of protecting the main tank, if it is in the roof space, is to case it and seal it above and to construct a lattice or other open panel in the ceiling just under. The hot air from the house will rise and keep the water from freezing.



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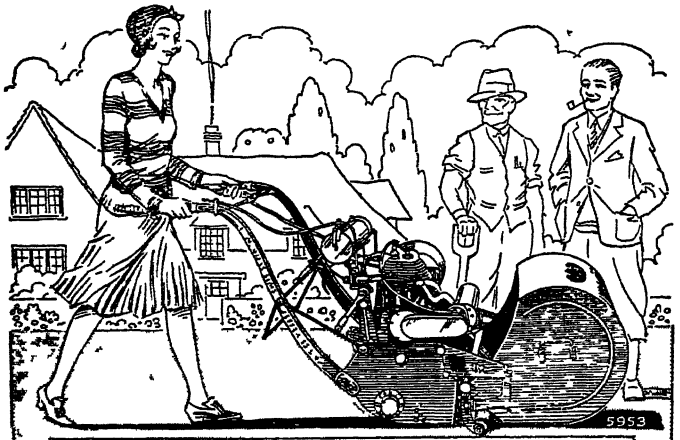
by Captain W. R. W. Kettlewell, R.N.

FOR the first time in my life I have learnt to blow a trumpet which I have made myself and I am a proud man in consequence. My wife and I have known Miss Margaret James for a good many years now and when she started her experiments with bamboo whistle-pipes for school children, we very soon heard of them. This led to the starting of a week-end school of pipe-making and playing for adults here in Burford and although I was not a student, it was not long before I found myself set to work whittling an A pipe out of a length of curtain rod bamboo. After it had been shaped, I must needs cut the finger holes and tune it. This necessitated fingering up and down the scale, clumsily at first, but before I had made six pipes I found myself, almost unconsciously, playing elementary tunes. This pipe-making and playing business is far from being just a pretty novelty, it is one of the most ingenious games for the education of the hand, eye and ear, all at the same time. For, not only does the pupil have to perform the hand-work of cutting-out and hole-boring, which necessitates the use of saw, chisel, file and knife, but the ears and fingers are exercised in the getting of pitch and tuning. After that comes the actual playing in unison and in parts, and, finally, if the spirit so moves one, the finished pipe presents a splendid medium for freehand decoration, whether in carving or in painting or both. Blowing one's own trumpet has ceased, indeed, to be a term of reproach.

Our Readers' Motoring Tales – 17

ON a Yorkshire moor, in a cold mist, we stopped near a signpost and my companion got out to try to read the name on it. As she did so, in jumped a little cockerel, which crouched in the warmth of the engine and snuggled up to my ankles.– *S.J.*

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The First Four Months on a Farm

Notes from the Master's Diary

THERE has been no more popular feature of THE COUNTRYMAN than the straightforward quarterly notes by the author of 'My Nine Years' Farming', which have been appearing in our pages for some years. Our contributor's major income has been from milk and he is now going in for pigs. He is in the South of England and has the advantage of being the owner of his land. Another subscriber, who, at Michaelmas, became the tenant of 300 acres in the south-eastern part of the country, is hoping to make a living out of fat lambs, early potatoes, malting barley and fresh-calved heifers. Like the author of 'My Nine Years' Farming', he has had oversea experience. But while our old contributor is inhibited by War wounds from physical activity on his farm, other than walking and driving round, our other subscriber is taking his share in ploughing and the other work of his farm. He has been good enough to let us see his diary, and we have made the following extracts, in illustration of the life on such a holding as his. After the earlier entries we have noted chiefly the work done by the master:

September. – Decided to keep the shepherd, one carter, another carter who can drive the tractor, and an odd man . . . Bottom end of big ley very dirty. Tractor and plough no good . . . Inspected rabbit wire, also cottages – crampy but in fair repair . . . Bought at D. sale, through L., 41 sixth ewes, 40 fourth and 31 second; £327 2. 6. . . . Deposited plate at bank . . . Bought seeds, £26 13., and two mares £22 each . . . Bought at various sales plough and other implements, £24 6. 6., 5 killing heifers, £219 17. 6 and 20 calves £185, and two geldings, £31 10. and £16 16, further equipment, £91 10. 3. Stock now, 5 horses, 157 ewes, 10 ewe lambs, 1 ram, 1 ram lamb, 20 weaned calves and 15 killing heifers.

October. – More equipment purchases £58 15. Shepherd foot-rotting sheep. Ploughing for vetches. Equipment sent for repairs . . . More equipment, £23 9. 6. Calf died . . . W.P. and self ploughing. Calves drenched . . . Sheep in clover for an hour . . . W.P. and self ploughing. Second calf died . . . Repairs. Set up tank . . . W.P. and self ploughing. Clearing dung. Sheep in clover 2 hours . . . W.P. and



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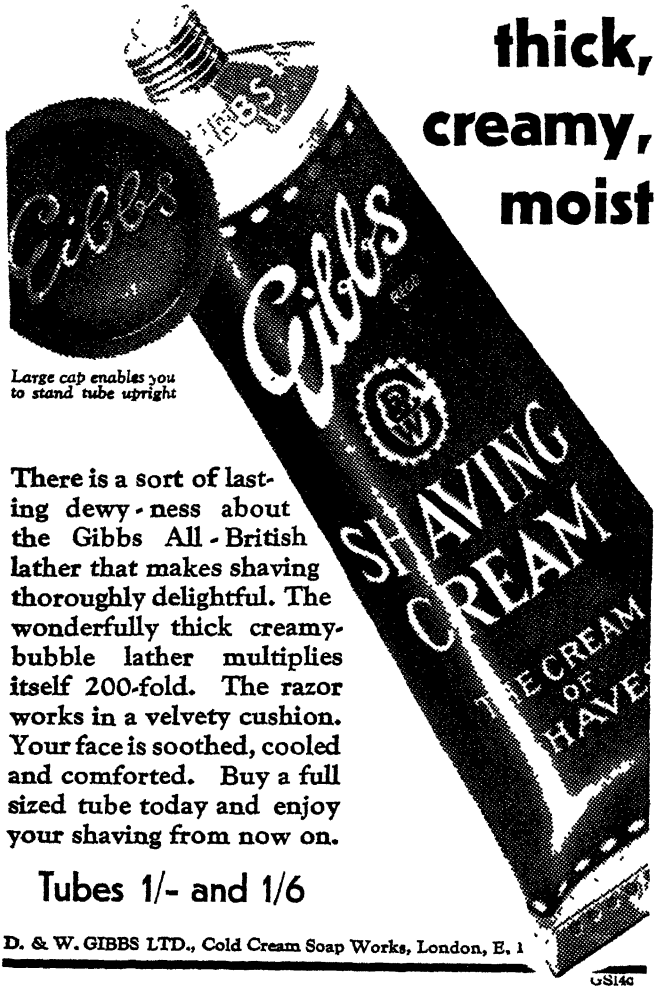
27

self ploughing . . . Finished headland and started harrowing down. Getting out dung. Pitching fold in mustard. Sheep in clover in afternoon . . . Harrowing. At fair. Bought 5 killing heifers, £14 10. Agreed with shepherd for 36*s.*, cottage and 3*d.* for each lamb weaned, . . . Rolling and harrowing. Dung cart. Bought two mares, £65 the pair, and equipment £25. Cultivating fallow for winter oats. Bought Frisian bull, £14 . . . Self drilling rye and barley; others harrowing down, picking up onion couch, dung spreading, burning couch. Sheep on trefoil in afternoon . . . Too much couch to drill fallow. Ploughing. Corn merchant, £60 10. 2 . . . Started to plough fallow, very dirty. Dung cart . . . Ditto . . . Harrowing and picking up couch. Started to keep horses in at nights. Sheep broke out into rape during night . . . Drilled; others cultivating, harrows, carting . . . Sheep broke out again . . . Ploughing and harrowing . . . Self and W.P. ploughing. Dung . . . Self and W.P. ploughing. Tractor-ploughing of big ley arranged for. Self and W.P. ploughing. Telephone installed . . . W.P. and self ploughing. Dung . . . Ditto.

November.—W.P. ploughing. R., P., B. and self started mangel harvest . . . W.P. finished ploughing; self rolling. Mangels . . . Mangels. W.P. harrowing. Carting . . . Self and W.P. drilling, harrowing, and sowing. Mangels . . . Mangels, harrowing, carting . . . Ditto . . . Self at mangels. W.P. ploughing . . . Mangels. Took on C at 5*s.* 6*d.* per day. W.P. ploughing. Self harrowing. Pigs and sheep broke out . . . Mangels. Self harrowing and to market . . . W.P. finished ploughing; harrowing. Shepherd doing ewes' feet. Saw keeper re trespassers . . . Mangels. Self harrowing. Dressed wheat. Wages for week over £10 . . . W.P. ploughing, Drilling; too sticky. Mangels stopped by wet . . . Wet . . . Wet . . . Mangels. P. and self carting dung. W.P. ploughing . . . Self drilling. Mangels . . . Mangels finished. Harrowing . . . Self drilling. W.P. harrowing. Dressing seed corn. Clamping mangels . . . Self drilling . . . Market. Drilling. Clamping. Rolling. Harrowing . . . Threshing oats; badly mauled by rats. W. and self lugged 90 sacks to corn barn . . . Took on K. Finished threshing wheat; incredible number of rats. Drilling. Self harrowing. Wages over £12. Sow had ½ pint linseed and wine glass castor oil . . . Finished oat rick. Put up cake and corn for shepherd . . . W.P. and self ploughing. Carting. Clamping . . . Self and W.P. harrowing. Clamping. Keepers at rabbits . . . Self ploughing. Clamping. Estate agree place has been badly neglected. Several weaners have ringworm . . . W.P. and self ploughing, but long stubble a nuisance. Clamping . . . Double furrows, 2½ to 4 acres daily at 7*s.* 6*d.* to 12*s.* 6*d.* an acre. W.P. already a convert . . . Self ploughing . . . Dung. Finished mangels; two men paid off . . . Self ploughing K. attending rabbit wire.

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December. – Finished wheat-sowing. Neighbours still at it; Apparently one can sow up to Christmas on coastal land. Does this beget easy-going farming? Self with harrows . . . K.P. dressed calves for ringworm. Market . . . Self ploughing until rain. Not a very satisfactory day . . . Self ploughing . . . Ditto . . . In town, Rugger match and Smithfield. Bought equipment £23 15. . . . W.P. ploughing 9 inches. Messy. Ewes keep getting cast. Now heavy in lamb and in good condition. Feet much better . . . Self at dung cart . . . Dung carting; self in barn . . . Dung. Ploughing. First lamb . . . Self ploughing. Ewe died. Two ewes aborted . . . Self taking sheep tackle and hut over to rape . . . Ploughing; wheel came off. Paid valuation £495. 14. 9.; lower than expected . . . Only 2 feet of water in well at 60 feet . . . Self ploughing . . . Wheat very disappointing B. field, but coming well south side; oats well forward . . . Self ploughing . . . Ditto. Ewe died, dropsical . . . Self ploughing . . . Gave each married man 5 lb. beef, W.P. ¼ lb. tobacco, boys cigarettes. Men seem thoroughly reliable lot. Will increase wages as soon as finances permit . . . Boxing Day self ploughing . . . Self ploughing . . . Self putting up pig huts. Blossom very lame; old stake wound. Another ewe slipped.

'On the whole', the young farmer wrote on the last day of the year, 'a good start has been made. For about outlay estimated have more stock than anticipated and nearly complete equipment. Hay-making machinery, better bought new, to get. Hedges, ditches and buildings deplorable, but estate made a start. Fact that outgoing tenant got only £385 by valuation for a 313 acre farm with 100 tons of hay and 40 acres of roots speaks for itself. Weaners speculative but must have something in yard and bullocks too dear. Position – Arable: winter oats 2 acres, wheat 25, ploughed for spring corn (including 5 acres wheat eaten by slugs) 40, root-land to come for Spring corn or rape 34; land now being dunged and ploughed for roots 24½, winter vetches 2½, fallow for Spring vetches 4, rye and winter barley 6, seeds 38, total 178. Grass 85, common 45, miscellaneous 5, total 313 acres. Stock: 2-year old heifers 20, bull 1, weaner heifers 18, total 39; flock ewes 154, ewe tegs 40, rams 2, total 196; 12-months-old gilts, close to farrowing 4, 8-months-old, empty, 2, total 6; horses 7.

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Unaccountable Fanciful

by the Roadman

OLD Miss' Gosden she be an unaccountable fanciful old gal, very unaccountable fanciful she be, sure! Only larst week I see she doddling down the lane when I was setting in the hedge taking my bit o' dinner. 'Why Miss' Gosden,' I says, 'where be you a-gwine to this time o' day? You'm usually in your gay-ground seeing 'tis on twelve?' 'Ah,' she says, 'I've just about give up my gay-ground. What with the snags, the emmets, the sparrs and the caffinchers, all working so mischieful there's just about no heart left in my gay-ground at all. So seeing 'tis May by the calendar, and the weather looking a bit like it too, I concluded I'd step it to the Copses and kind o' welcome in the May same as the old folks used to.' 'An' how was that Miss' Gosden?' I says. 'Wall,' she says, 'they did used to walk in the woodlands an' deck theirselves with flowers, reglar wreaths for their heads they made, with bluebells an' suchlike and then they'd set down under the trees an' wave a spray o' sweet Mayflower an' sing old songs, an' when the cuckoo hollered they'd holler back at he till you couldn't tell which twas, they or the bird, an' the bird he couldn't tell neither but would come up close to 'em setting on a bough, all in a mizmaze.' And then she sets down suddenlike along o' me, and she says, 'Come think of it I won't goo to the Copses; there's May bugs there, an' they just do tarrify I, the way they gets in my hair an' I can't scrat 'em out. Wonder what they was made for? Some good reason p'raps or p'raps only just to pester. No! I guess I'll set along o' you an' smoke my lil' black pipe in peace.' Which she did accordingly, only she did nabble so about the old May Days, Pharisees and a mort of queer old stories that my old brain felt all of a louster afore she'd went. Oh! Miss' Gosden she be an unaccountable fanciful old gal, oh, unaccountable fanciful indeed. – *E.B.*

A letter of great interest to all who seek pleasure or profit out-o'-doors

'IT gives me great pleasure to assure you that I found my 'Burberry' perfectly drench-proof. Never once did it fail me, however heavy the rain.

'In every way I have found my coat satisfactory; warm in Winter, not the least uncomfortably so in Summer, and a very shield of comfort on cold, windy days.'

—R.B.



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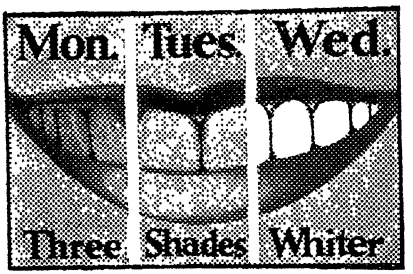
An Hour from London

by A Business Man

THERE must be hundreds of thousands of born countrymen living in our large towns and cities. Some forget the country. Some remember in vain. A lucky few return. I am one of those who had almost forgotten. Then in 1930 a friend placed in my hands a copy of THE COUNTRYMAN. Because of that, because I took a copy to my wife, we decided to go back. That is as far as was possible, for I must come to London daily to make a living. Shall I mention that I am the son of a small town doctor? As a youth I was sent for three years to a midland Agricultural and Horticultural College. It was understood that I was to go to a large farmer for a few years and that after that my father was to buy me a small farm. Then my father had an accident and it was found that he was insolvent. I had to turn my back upon the country. I came to London and entered the advertising business. In London I have remained for over a quarter of a century (except for the War years); here I met my wife, a Dutch woman with memories reaching back to the 'Orchideenlaan' at Heemstede where her mother's cottage looks out across level fields of hyacinths, tulips and daffodils. Our modest requirements were a house not more than one hour from London, near a good private school for girls, and with three or four acres of garden and meadow in a good state of cultivation and well stocked; price £1,500 to £2,000.

Some agents took a little trouble; others sent in sheaves of 'Permits to view' impossible places, at prices from £500 to £5,000. In six months we had particulars of 400 to 500. The low-priced ones were inaccessible or were old, dilapidated and insanitary. The high-priced ones were beyond our needs and our means. Those which were just right had generally been sold the day before. So we went off in our

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3 *shades* *in* **3** *days*

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car to look for ourselves. And the very first day, in the very first hour, as I was negotiating a right-angle bend my wife clutched my arm and called out 'Stop the car!' I looked for danger, but there was none. Instead of that my wife was pointing with quivering finger at a house. On the following Friday, my wife's birthday, I was able to make her a present of the agreement. Behind the cold 'well-constructed, charming and desirable residence with four bedrooms, two recep., B.W.C., H. & C., good garden, gar.', we found clematis, a view over miles of open country, and sixty-years-old turf, a rabbitry, a fish pond and quinces and medlars as well as the apples, pears, damsons and plums we expected.

The previous owner had kept a man. I proposed to do everything myself with occasional help. I bought some text books and periodicals on gardening, poultry, bees and goats. But I soon found myself in difficulties and not at all reluctant to engage another pair of hands. This does not mean, however, that my leisure hours have been lazy. I have not had an idle moment all the summer and autumn. Each day I have risen several hours earlier than I have been wont to do for many years. And if I have gone to bed a little earlier at night there has been a gain each day. Not only a gain in time either, but in other things. Each day I have gone to bed healthily fatigued. My wife has in her cupboards* a hundredweight of jam, besides 24 lbs. of honey, 50 lbs. of bottled fruit, 20 lbs. of pickles, 10 lbs. of chutney and several cans of dried herbs. I myself have stored half a ton of potatoes and more than a thousand apples. We have fed royally throughout the summer and autumn on almost every kind of English vegetable and fruit. Many friends and relations have also taken their toll. In addition we have the improved health of ourselves and our little daughter, and all this better, brighter, bigger life at not one penny more to purchase than the cribbed and cabined existence we formerly tolerated in a London flat.

*The article was written in the autumn

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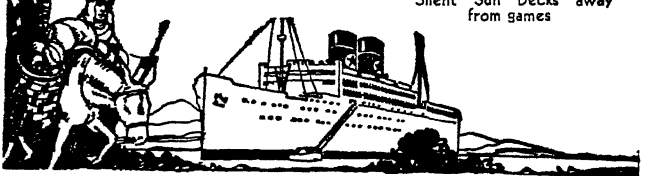
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Tail Corn

A YOUTH at a farmhouse asked the village librarian if she had a book on the diseases of cows. She hadn't, but, being up to her job, she promptly said she would get one. The book came and was carried off by the applicant. A month passed and he was asked if he had not finished with the book. He had not. When he had had it out two months he was asked why he did not return it. Had he not read it? Yes, he had read it? Why was he keeping it then? 'I'm copying it all out.'

AMONG the girls who answered our advertisement of a post on THE COUNTRYMAN were a solicitor, a barrister, an M.A., five B.A.'s, and an air pilot.

'YOU bin too high now simly to live along 'o we poor folk.' Such a lilt has the speech of the Cotswolds.

'DID ever you see lobelia seed, Miss?' asked the cottager, ''Tis as small – oh, smaller than dust.'

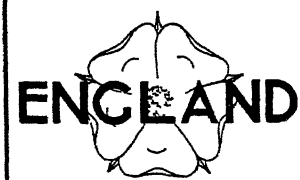
'YES, Miss,' said the farmer, 'we be overswarmed with birds. And they old men up in Parlyment don't know what tes like in the country. Won't even let the boys go birds-nesting, and we be overswarmed with birds.'

AS Mr. Bostock, the head of the firm that makes Lotus shoes, has a fine garden, he naturally wants to walk round it in the morning before he goes to the office. But many a morning the grass paths are wet, and it is no use starting the business day in wet shoes. So he has had evolved for him a damp-proof shoe, with elastic sides, which it is possible to slip on and off easily for these early morning strolls. A pair has just been sent to the Editor (after a preliminary demand for his size) and he reports that these garden-owners' shoes are excellent. 'May everything Mr. Bostock sows', he ejaculates, 'come true to name!'

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The Trend of Agricultural Opinion

ABOUT what has happened at the N.F.U., a well-informed subscriber writes: 'The retirement of R. R. Robbins and T. H. Ryland, who have run the show for the last fourteen years, is definite and final. Robbins is a Free Trader, and both are strong individualists. They have bitterly opposed the Marketing Act, but facts and the current of opinion in the N.F.U. itself have been too strong for them, and they have retired. There is no doubt that they have done great service in constructing the organization and holding it together in the presence of cross-political currents, but their retirement is not an unmitigated evil, as in my opinion, they were the main obstacles to the progress of the Co-operation movement in the industry. At the same time I think there will be a loosening of the organization which will make the repeated attempts at inroad by politicians a good deal easier. Robbins has successfully held them off, but there is no one left who could do it now. Both these men were very able, particularly Robbins, and it is difficult to gauge the balance of gain and loss consequent on his retirement. There is no likelihood of his return, however much he may be pressed to do so'.

I AM bartering fifty quarters of oats for barley. There is such a shortage of cash among farmers and dealers that quite a lot of bartering is going on, 'cross dealing' they call it.

Were I a landlord I should make every effort to have the very best Home Farm I could as an investment, as Lord Lymington is doing. We do not know to-day what the real value of any money investment is, but a first class home farm will always mean a home.

As to a recent deliverance on synthetic food, how are we going to produce anything synthetic cheaper than wheat at £6 a ton, or milk at 9*d.* a gallon? Much now sells at 4*d.* a gallon. – R.H.R.



H. W. Freeman

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Rural Life. – It is a happy title which Dame Una Pope-Hennessy has given her excellent centenary biography of Sir Walter Scott, *The Laird of Abbotsford* (Putnam, pp. 310, 7*s.* 6*d.*) Scott's delight in the historic land he bought and the house he built, with such efforts, was the vital part of his life. The book is most readable and the credible Scott it presents will make an impression on those who know the poet and novelist through Lockhart alone. His estate must have cost £70,000, all made by amazing literary industry. He bought not only 6,000 chestnuts and elms and 100,000 birches, but 3,000 laburnums and 2,000 sweet-briars. The book is plain-spoken about the 'Shirra's' faults, but he remains a gentleman. – *The Blecheley (Bletchley) Diary of the Rev. William Cole*, 1765-67, carefully edited by F. G. Stokes, with an admirable introduction by Helen Weddell, (Constable, pp. 452, with map, 16*s.*) is not so racy as our own Farmer-Parson Rogers' lucubrations, but it is a record of value, and, as a few extracts show, good reading: 'For it freezing, 8 or 10 large Kites & Hawkes fell from the Trees & were carried into the House, their Wings & Feathers so frozen that they could not get off. . . . They made a sort of Procession with a Fiddle & a German Flute, Jem dressed out with Ribbands & Tom Hearne dancing before the last Hay Cart . . . We got a few Clots of Cow Dung being Fewel for the Brewhouse & Dairy, & made in square Moulds & dried in the Sun . . . I cudgelled Jem for staying so long on an Errand . . . Mr. Risley who killed the Highwayman . . . Only one Woman at Church, Gammar Kenney, who I asked to Dinner, with Gaffar Scot, Will Turpin, John Seare & Sam Pollard, the only poor Men there . . . I had 3 Washer-Women, being a Wash of 6 or 7 Weeks . . . He excused Dr. Peltingall,

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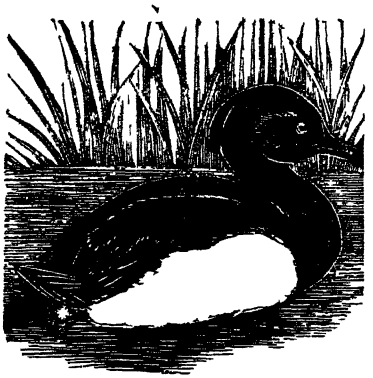
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rector of Stoke-Hammond, for kicking his Maid because she was a very bad one'.

Country Fiction. – In the volume of tales by H. E. Bates, called *The Black Boxer*, which has been included in the Pharos Editions, (pp. 272, 7*s.* 6*d.*) we have sketches of country life, done with uncommon penetration and simplicity. Part of their effectiveness is due to the author always breaking off immediately the essential incidents or points of character are recorded. – In *John Peel* by J. M. Denwood (Hutchinson, 7*s.* 6*d.*) the author of *Red Ike* (27th thousand) brings to life the hero of 'D'ye Ken John Peel?' and gladdens northern readers with a Cumberland novel with bite in it. The author, who knew Peel's son, is strong in dialect and songs (unexpurgated). Old Cumberland was hearty and independent but rougher than some revivers of the past like to believe, and this story is loyal to the facts. – *Tumult in the North* by George Preedy (Bodley Head) is also a tale – 389 pages for 3*s.* 6*d.* – from Cumberland, a romantic tale of the '15, rather in the Scott manner. – There have been several novels, English and American, on the subjection of a family to a farm. In *Green Bondage* (Nicholson and Watson, 7*s.* 6*d.*) Frances Ogilvie pictures the life of the struggling tobacco farmer in Kentucky. – The Irish tale *Cloonagh* (Constable, 7*s.* 6*d.*) by Dorothy M. Large, who has always lived in small places or in the wilds, is of rural Ireland as seen by an Irishwoman, and that matters a great deal. *Cloonagh* contains not only folk but a dog. Here is the life of the little town. – In *Eastward Drift* by Edward Percy (Nicholson and Watson pp. 415, 7*s.* 6*d.*) there is added to the well-produced tragi-comedy of a mercantile family a particularly able account of what happened to an octogenarian City man when he retired alone to a cottage on Romney Marsh, a delightful etching of a naturalist-waif, and a glimpse of his dog, Asthma. – Handy size means handy size when applied to Benn's paper-covered Ninepenny Novels 'by leaders of modern fiction'; we are delighted



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with them. In the specimens before us the septuagenarian ruralist, Eden Philpotts, is represented by a characteristic tale, *The Broom Squires*, i.e. the gypsies.

Wild Life.—We welcome *Nature by Night* by Arthur R. Thompson (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 132, 12*s.* 6*d.*) A hundred or more photographs, by the author, of the creatures of our own countryside are so satisfying that the book is in its third impression. We have never seen anything better than the badger series and the illustrations of field and other mice. The author knows two men who have killed between them 800 badgers! It is indeed 'an unenviable record'. Compare with it 'badger-watching'; 'one is pitting one's power of observation and woodcraft against one of the shyest and most retiring creatures left to us, and it is surprising what can be done. I have stood still, flat against a tree trunk and had a badger not a yard from my feet. The animal sat and enjoyed the gloaming. It stayed ten minutes quite at ease.' Again he writes, 'while I have been lying flat a badger has come and walked to within twelve inches of my head before it has discovered my presence'. The author has heard of galleries in a really old sett which our oldest mammalian residents have carried a hundred yards. On the subject of foxes the author is of opinion that a young fox 'does not realize it is being seriously hunted, rather enjoys it than otherwise', but once 'it cannot shake its pursuers off and is running for its life, it is not long before it shows the utmost anxiety and distress'. How about a non-human foe? 'Some idea of a rabbit's suffering when a stoat fastens on to it will be gathered from the fact that the teeth will be found to be clogged with soil; the rabbit has bitten into the soil in its agony. I have never seen this mentioned, but it is almost invariably the case.' It will be remembered that the bite is usually behind the ear. What, however, of the statement which Sam Kemp, in *Black Frontiers* (Harrap, pp. 222, illus., 8*s.* 6*d.*) makes, in confirmation of the testimony of

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many travellers, that according to natives, 'the bite of a lion seems to have a numbing effect, like that which follows the smoking of hemp'? The author of this book bears out the stories of old-timers – we heard one the other day – of the way in which South Africa once teemed with game. From a kopje 'we could see great herds of elephants, giraffes, many varieties of antelope, zebras, quaggas, lions, hyenas, jackals, rhinos. "Two hundred thousand at least", hazarded Tommy. He wasn't far wrong. The remarkable part of it was that the beasts seemed totally unafraid of each other. Lions stalked between rows of antelopes, which kept their distance but appeared unafraid.' But see the 'Times' photographs. – With a title as taking as *Hunting Insects in the South Seas* by Evelyn Cheeseman, (Allan, pp. 243, 12*s.* 6*d.*) a 'notice' is unnecessary. Fireflies, the author emphasizes, are not phosphorescent but luminous. The material for the light is secreted and combustion takes place by the introduction of oxygen. – If one skips the rhapsodizing in *The Life of the Butterfly* by Friedrich Schnack (Allen and Unwin, pp. 278, 7*s.* 6*d.*) there is information to be got in the forty-five chapters devoted to different varieties of butterfly and moth. The author found a death's head moth chrysalis nearly a foot and a half below the level of the soil. And being a child he was scared by its chirrup. He has heard the 'piteous, mouse-like squeak' of the male moth fifty yards off. 'The male in flight unpacks a tuft of hair out of an abdominal pouch and swings its perfume through the air.' – *Friends of Mankind* by Douglas English, with preface by the headmaster of Harrow (R.S.P.C.A., pp. 117, illus., 1*s.* 6*d.*) is a school reader at which country school children will not turn up their noses. – *Elements of Biology* by C. von Wyss (Christophers, pp. 342, 122 illus., 6*s.*) is good and cheap, and just the kind of book to awaken interest. The first part is on the animal and vegetable life of the four seasons. The whole tone and spirit, and the illustrations, could not be better.

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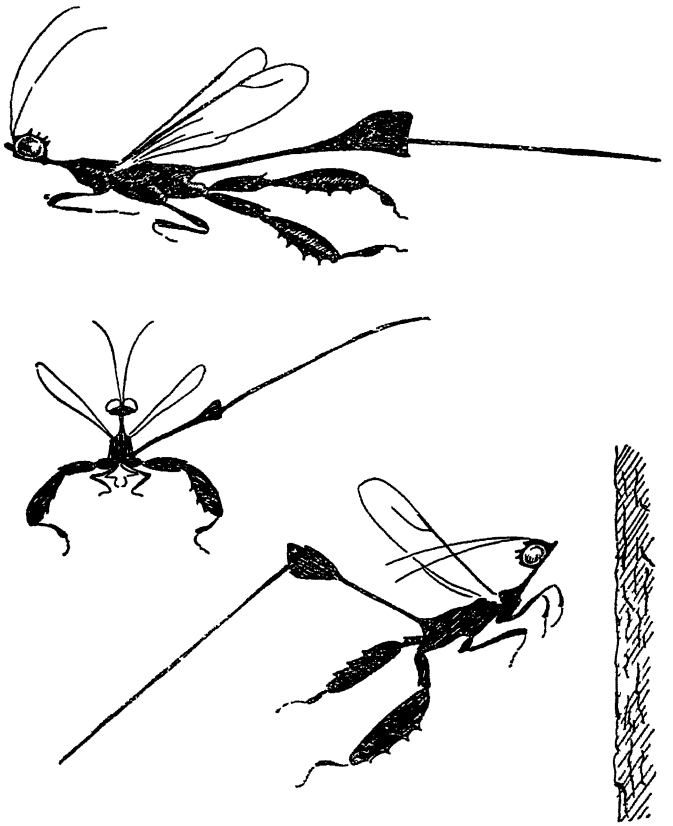
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276, 5*s*.) ranges helpfully from 'keeping ourselves not only physically but mentally fit' and being 'informed citizens' to accounts of the machinery of government from the parish council to Parliament and the League of Nations. – *In Bedfordshire Byways* by A. W. Baldwin and W. E. Palmer (Sidney Press, Bedford, pp. 111, 5*s*.) we have the kind of book of local patriotism – one half of this one is sketches – which might well be produced in other counties. – Donald Maxwell, as author-artist, breaks new ground with *A Detective in Sussex* (Lane, pp. 182, 30 illus., 6*s*.) and his recent *Detective in Kent*. He brings commonsense as well as learning to the unravelling of the history of landscapes. It is amusing to find Camden (d. 1623) writing of the Sussex iron industry that 'whether the nation is in any way advantaged by the iron-mines is a doubt which the next age will be better able to resolve'. – *High Easter*, 1762-1848, by that active antiquary, the late Rev. Edward Gepp (Benham, pp. 100) is good parish work. As we turn over the pages we light on 'A coffin for Turnbridge's children, 2*s*.', which, as the author says, was a remarkable piece of economy. – *A Scotsman's Heritage* (MacLehose, pp 212, 7*s*. 6*d*.) might easily have been turgid. It is a restrained, informing up-to-date book by seven Scots of such weight as the Duke of Atholl, Lord Macmillan, Sir D. Y. Cameron and Major Walter Elliott, M.P., who has a casual reference to the Arab as 'one of the larger parasites of the camel'. Why is there no chapter on the land? – In *Outward Ho!* (Williams and Norgate, pp. 103, 3*s*. and 1*s*. 6*d*.) James Leakey, inspired by the success of the Garden City at his doors in Hertfordshire, has written, with a clarity which does not mark the treatises of every reformer, a sincere plea for group settlements of picked rural emigrants, 'a sort of half-way house between the Utopias of "Looking Backward" and "News from Nowhere" on the one hand and the solid realities of Letchworth and Welwyn on the other'. A county or a group of counties is to raise, say, £25,000 to

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give a send-off to its 'filiale or overseas annexe'. A scheme would provide for about fifty young couples under an experienced leader with a five-year contract, and maintenance of the group in the wilds would be guaranteed for a period. – *Gone Abroad* by George Graves (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 351, 9*s*. 6*d*.), a new kind of guidebook to Germany and Belgium, is done in the direct, frank, succinct way in which a man or woman of wit, intelligence and gemuthlichkeit would write to a friend. 'Germany is a land of apple-trees and cherry-trees and vineyards, of fine broad roads, old gabled houses, ruined castles, modern concrete flats, rivers, planetariums, aerodromes, hikers, museums, rathskellers, art galleries, zoos, broad green fields, magnificent hotels, venison, old barracks, and more apple-trees. Its young people are crazy about physical fitness. (My first sight of a Berlin suburb was that of an open-air track round which fifteen men and two girls were running at 8 a.m.) On the whole, the women have marvellous figures, while the men are upstanding, broad-shouldered chaps.' – Readers who have felt the lure of Scandinavia should know of the 'Norwegian Magazine' edited by the Director of Education for Oxfordshire, T. Olaf Willson, C.B.E. (Kidlington, Oxford). – There could not be a more impressive illustration of the way in which the touring car and the aeroplane are taking people from country to country than a handy phrase-book *Guide to* 25 *of the Languages of Europe*, a series of practical parallel columns, arranged in groups according to language similarities. The volume recognizes its necessary limitations, and, within them, is highly efficient.

The Garden. – In *Laura's Garden* (Allen and Unwin, pp. 223, 5*s*.) Count de Comminges, translated by Bernard Miall, artfully records in the form of a diary, the garden life of a French chatelaine and her family. De Comminges is certainly French – but there! The proper subject of the book, his fair lady, has 'learned by experience that to make a garden one must contrive to suppress every desire that

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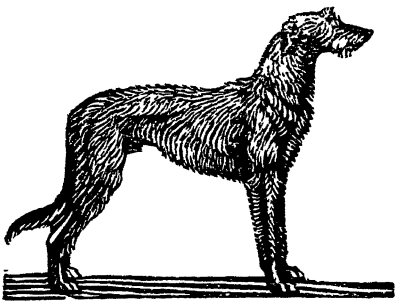
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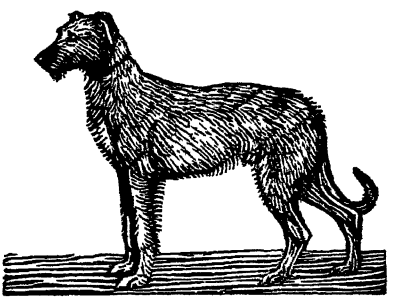
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does not converge upon the essential aim, harmony'. – *Plant Hunting in the Wilds* by Captain F. Kingdon-Ward (Figurehead, pp. 78, illus., 2*s.* 6*d.*) a record of Asiatic travel, tells those who like unusual flowers how they are discovered and procured. – *Vegetables, their Use, Abuse and Neglect* by Charles E. Hecht (Food Education Society, 3*d.*) and *A Salad a Day* (1½*d.*) are worth sending for. – *The Improvement of Woodlands* ('Country Life', pp. 250, illus., 10*s.* 6*d.*) by W. E. Hiley, lately lecturer in forestry economics at Oxford, is more popular than his *Economics of Forestry*. He has a care for beauty and shelter as well as for profit, and is as comprehensive as practical. The book answers no end of questions adequately, and will set some of our readers planting next winter.



Dogs, Angling, etc. – The last wolf was killed in Ireland less than 150 years ago. In *The Irish Wolfhound* (pp. 253, 8*s.*) Phyllis Gardner has written and the Dundalgan Press, Dundalk, has pleasantly produced 'a short historical sketch' of the greatest interest, for it is not only a most painstaking record (from B.C. 1400) but a valuable collection of as many as a hundred wood engravings of distinction by the author and her sister. Irish and Scottish deerhounds are also described and



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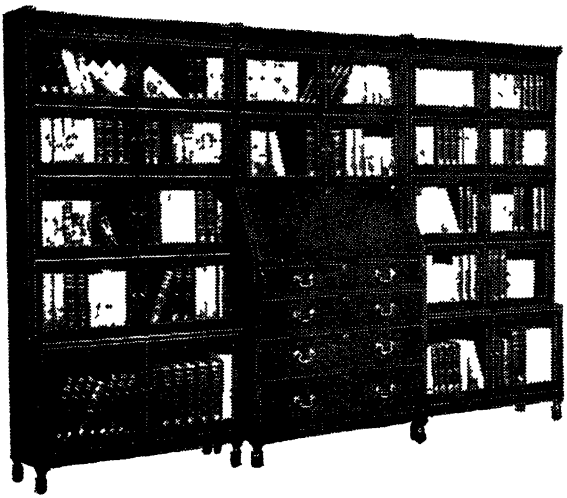
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illustrated.—The *Dog World Annual* (Watmoughs, pp. 126, 2*s*.) with, on each page, several illustrations of dog-breeders and their dogs, is a remarkable canine portrait gallery.—Some fifteen angling stories and sketches by divers hands (from Andrew Lang to Horace Hutchinson) are what are offered in *The Humane Angler*, edited by J. Haslette Vasey (Hutchinson, pp. 256, 6*s*.)—'It is a curious fact that rambling has been far more popular in the northern part of England than in the south' is one of the things in *The Complete Hiker and Camper* by C. F. Carr, with hints to walkers by T. W. Green, 'the champion walker' (Pitman, pp. 151, illus.) T. W. G. is against walking sticks.—*The Green Company* by Leslie A. Paul, 'Headman of the Woodcraft Folk' (Daniel, pp. 151, 2*s*.) is 'pow-wows on pioneering for boys and girls', with taking illustrations.

Farming.—The increase in the size of Sir John Russell's *Soil Conditions and Plant Growth* (Longmans, 60 illus., 21*s*.) between its first and sixth edition, from 168 pages to its present 642, is evidence of the amazing growth in our knowledge of the conditions of plant life below and above ground. We owe it to the studies carried out not only at Rothamsted but all over the world, as shown by the international conference in Russia. Wherever this large volume is opened there is something illuminating or suggestive: 'The presence or absence of worm casts on pastures is one of the surest ways of showing whether the land is "sweet" or "sour" . . . So marked are the physical effects of humus that, if 15 or 20 per cent is present, the operation of other factors ceases to count for much; the distinctions between sands, loams and clays are obliterated . . . Until the blossom is "set" vigorous growth is not encouraged [by the glasshouse tomato-growers] and while the atmosphere is artificially damped, water is withheld from the roots until "the plants cry for it".'—*Combine Harvesting in* 1931 is the first of the sixpenny 'Occasional Notes on Mechanised Farming' which the Oxford Institute for Research in



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Agricultural Engineering is going to issue. – No reader who invests 9*d.* in the Ministry of Agriculture's excellent *Mushroom-Growing* (Whitehall Place, pp. 24, and first-rate photographs) can fail to get a crop. With this brochure may be mentioned the Ministry's *Fertility and Animal Breeding* (pp. 54, 1*s.* 6*d.*) – an admirable treatise – *Feeding of Cows* (pp. 40, 9*d.*) and *Manures and Manuring* (pp. 94, 1*s.* 3*d.*) which are everything they should be. – The comprehensive *Marketing of Rabbit Flesh* by W. King Wilson, the well-known Harper Adams rabbit expert, with preface by Dr. Crowther (Whatmoughs, pp. 72, illus., 1*s.* 6*d.*) is really useful. – One of the north *v.* south Wireless controversialists missed a point by omitting to cite the closely-packed *Journal of the Orkney Agricultural Discussion Society*, the sixth volume of which (pp. 89, plus 37 pages of advertisements – W. R. Mackintosh, Kirkwall) is at a notably high intellectual level. – 'In 20 years' experience, in the administration of the Small Holdings Act I have never known a small-holder to fail who has really tried to succeed' is the testimony of Mr. W. J. Pulford, land agent for the Salop County Council, in his admirable report on the last year's work.

Miscellaneous. – Not the least interesting pages in *Rubens: Painter and Diplomat* by Emile Cammaerts (Faber and Faber, pp. 294, with 33 reproductions, 15*s.*) are those in which we get a reminder about the painter's workshop, from which 3,000 pictures emanated, Rubens, – or shall we say Rubens and Co.? – having, in most cases, provided the sketches and touched up the paintings before their final delivery. Many country houses no doubt possess pieces of which Rubens could not say in his famous phrase, 'Original by my own hand'. – Desmond MacCarthy's thirty-six *Portraits* (Putnam, pp. 305, 7*s.* 6*d.*) may be applauded not only because of their admirable quality, sanity and range – from Richard Burton, Bunyan and Balfour to Horace, Goethe, Oom Paul, and Mr. (not Mrs.) Patrick Campbell – but because of a brevity and conciseness which makes them serviceable to

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readers who have ordinarily little time for literary appreciations. – In his poems, *Studies* (Deane and Sons, pp. 43) John Hargreaves has such touches as

East wind that brushes dry
What the rain has washed.

'If you care for a work of art, please clean, polish and care for it with your own hands. Metals should be cleaned and polished only when they require it, not in obedience to blind routine.' There are several pages of much-needed instructions on these lines in *The Staplands Workshops*, a beautifully illustrated account of fine work done there (at Neston, Cheshire). – If cooking does not improve in this country it will not be for lack of recipes. Was there ever such a spate of them? Here, for example, is *Light Fare Recipes for Corn Flower* running to 117 pages, but of very handy shape (Brown and Polson, Paisley). The name corn flour is now 76 years old. – In the country, *Whitaker*, that is a current *Whitaker*, is a necessity. Now over 1,000 pages, it renders a public service. (Whitaker, pp. 960, 6*s*.)

Rural Authors – 21. *A. G. Street*

SOME of our readers may remember an amusing article on trespasser-catching by a farmer, A. G. Street, which we published about two years ago. We recall his name on receiving *Farmer's Glory* (Faber and Faber, pp. 312, 7*s*. 6*d*.) the country story, which so many people have been talking about this past quarter. It is an unusual and admirable farming book. Indeed we should call it one of the best all-round books having to do with agriculture and rural life published for some time past. It is in the form of an autobiography. It is so well done that it is doubtful if any reader who misses the paragraph of introduction will realize that it is fiction until, well on in the book, the author uses another surname than his own. A. G. Street begins by giving us a

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study of a Wiltshire farmer of the period between 1907 and 1917, which is comparable in realism with 'A Farmer's Life' by George Bourne. We have also a convincing picture of his son and of the labourers.

The pre-War farm on which young Blanchard began by helping his father was about 400 acres arable, 90 acres down, 40 acres water meadow and 100 acres pasture. There were 13 horses, 400 sheep and 23 men. The father was a successful farmer and a good man, but he made money in a fashion which is impossible to-day. 'This same four-course rotation is still practised religiously', however, and 'good farmers are watching their capital shrink steadily and are doing so in a hurt and bewildered frame of mind'. One can see the old shepherds, men who were always studying their sheep and never seeming to tire of it. As a farmer said to us, 'Street's farm-workers are the real thing'. A shopkeeper who took a farm discovered his shepherd dozing under a bush on the down, with the flock grazing round him. 'What in the world are you doing, shepherd?' asked the employer. 'Lookin' atter your sheep,' replied the shepherd. 'Yes, yes, that's all very well, but you mustn't sit down. I can't pay you to sleep. You must get up and cut thistles, chop down some of these bushes, or do something.' 'Well, I bain't gwaine to; I be studyin' your interests, I tell 'ee, same as I allus have for any maister.' The agriculturists of that time did pretty well; if any of them went bankrupt 'these rare cases could always be definitely traced to drink, gambling, or some other vice or extravagance causing neglect of the farm'. The tact, the genius rather, of Blanchard's father in dealing with his men is well brought out, and now that harvest suppers are so much rarer, we must be grateful for this report of the foreman's speech: 'Chaps, we be all yer once again, and we be glad to be yer, and wishes to say thank you to the Guvnor fer a downright good spread. We've finished another year together, and we be truly thankful. The Guvnor 'e said as 'ow we ain't 'ad no onpleasantness, and that he do vally our

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work. Well, speaken fer one an' all, I says as 'ow we do vally to work fer 'un. Course, there might be a bit ov a miff now an' agen. The Guvnor 'ee will get hisself into such a tear at haymakin' an' harvest. But there, we do know as a can't 'elp it, an' we've come through this year all right, and shall agen, please God. Still, 'ee do play fair, in the manner of speaken, and we do vally it. We be pleased and proud to work fer un. Course, there's the young Guvnor. 'Ee do know a lot, and there's a limb ov a lot as 'ee don't know. But 'ee don't do so bad, and we be a learnin' 'im smartish. But I low fore I asks 'ee to all to drink their health, that I muddn' ferget the Guvnor's wife, who do a lot fer we. You do know, chaps, when you be ill or when yer wife do have a youngster 'tis the Missis who do make it go easier and more suent like. Well, now then, let's 'ave you, long life to 'em all!' The tale of the rick-builder is no doubt founded on fact. He was not pleased with his efforts in a high wind and 'paid some of his mates to stay with him till ten o'clock that evening, to pull the roof off and rebuild it more to his liking'. It is a true word and a hopeful that the author has to say on the capability of the labourer with machinery. And that response to a morning salutation in pouring rain is from life: 'Grand rain this be. Do a power of good. Ah! Wind's droppin' back. It be cummen, thanks be.'

When young Blanchard returned from Canada to the farm on his father's death and, immediately after the War, married, the life he was able to lead was after this fashion: 'I kept a hunter for myself and one for my wife. I went shooting at least two days a week during the winter. We went to tennis parties nearly every fine afternoon, and, in our turn, entertained up to as many as twenty guests on our own tennis-court, and usually to supper afterwards. I started golf–'. Then came the slump. He had to give up this life and the tenancy of half his land. He put all that remained in grass, dismissed all his sheep and nearly all his men, adopted the open-air machine milking system – rising

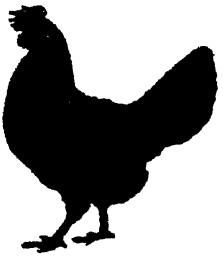
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at 4 a.m. – and ultimately took to retailing a part of the product in a neighbouring town. Incidentally, 'the cattle were definitely benefited in health, cleanliness and temper'. The bull which ran with them grew tame and insisted on coming into the bails and having his feed of cake like the cows. At haymaking time Blanchard got four men from the labour exchange – 'one was an old farm hand, two did their best, and one was hopeless'. In fact, he was almost back to farming Canadian fashion. In spite of all, he is sure that 'now is the time for a young man to start in farming'. He recognizes, as we all do, the value of the National Farmers' Union, but notes that whenever at county branch meetings 'I have voted on the popular side, after events have proved me to have been in the wrong'.

In the Epilogue the author says that 'the unpalatable fact must be admitted that we can import a better wheat than we can grow'. Further, 'I know that as a farmer I ought to buy English bacon, but I do not do so because I prefer the flavour of the Danish curing'. In a word, the farmer can succeed nowadays only by producing what the public wants. 'English meat, English dairy produce, English eggs are of better quality than foreign.' 'The future of British farming depends not on Government aid in the shape of doles but on the ability of the farmer to purchase low-priced imported grain and feeding stuffs; while so much is talked about wheat the fact that our land and climate are almost ideal for grass-farming is rarely mentioned. Surely the British farmer should exploit the natural advantages of his own soil rather than persist in wheat-growing?' Not under a guaranteed price of 75*s.* a quarter, which no Government is going to give him, would the author change his farming system for wheat-growing. 'To help our agricultural industry on a wheat basis' is 'to put the clock back'. 'The farmer must realize that the consumer is never again going to pay a sufficiently high price to enable producers to live in the style of 1906–1921.' Will not Mr. Orwin now write a novel?

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As will be seen, the rates work out favourably. Further, the arrangement is convenient both to subscribers and ourselves. Subscribers will be spared the trouble of making frequent remittances and of never being quite sure when a subscription is due. On our side, rendering (and sometimes re-rendering) accounts, receipt-sending and considerable postages, not to speak of book-keeping, are avoided. Already a number of subscribers pay for two years at a time, and several for longer periods.

Subscribers who avail themselves of the opportunity to subscribe to THE COUNTRYMAN for life will, of course, deduct from their Life Subscription any sum standing to their credit in respect of an unexpired yearly subscription.

The conductor of a periodical like THE COUNTRYMAN bought chiefly by subscription has a great advantage in conducting it. He knows who his readers are. It is my hope that this economy of Life Subscriptions may bring me into still closer contact with men and women in keen sympathy with the aims and the character of the review. – J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT

WISE SPENDING

THE rigorous economy imposed by present conditions calls for the most careful review of all unavoidable expense such as the essential insurances on the home, farm and car To reduce the annual insurance costs without impairing the quality of the protection hitherto enjoyed may seem impossible, but it can be done.

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The Sign of Security

AS ONE COUNTRYMAN TO ANOTHER

By what we have already said, you see our intentions – *Cromwell*

Agriculture can never regain even a moderate degree of prosperity unless it is treated on the lines of THE COUNTRYMAN, that is without Party bias – *Lord Ernle*

SINCE we last wrote, in November,* the Government has applied, according to the best of its information and ability, a new treatment to the most potentially valuable of the fields which the nation has given into its care. As will be seen from the space devoted in the present issue to the contributions headed 'Farming and the Countryside Fifty Years Hence', our minds are not on what has been done but on what has still to be done. A leading agricultural paper has been candid. 'Farmers,' it says, 'would far rather have a substantial tariff that would raise prices, and then they would not bother about organization'. On that attitude of mind the last word has just been said by a Conservative landowner of knowledge and repute. Mr. Christopher Turnor, writing in the 'Times', says, 'A high duty on imported food was never within the range of practical politics in a country in which 90 per cent of the voters are townsmen'. Whether the Government, in establishing import duties, has put the cart before the horse or the horse in its place in the shafts, whether protection should precede or follow upon organization is now an academic question. Import duties have been enacted and the nation will insist upon organization. Failing organization, it is easy to tell what will happen. The taxpayer will refuse to put his hands into his pockets for another penny

The Cart and the Horse

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for agriculture. Further, he will come definitely to the conclusion that it is vain to expect to see Britain an efficient agricultural country, and that the countryside must be regarded largely as a holiday resort for a preponderantly urban population.

OUR readers have other views for the future of rural Britain. The Government will have the commonsense – or come to grief – not only to ask for but to require organization. As the veteran Sir Horace Plunkett says, in the new 'Year Book of Agricultural Co-operation',* 'the difficulties in the way are unquestionably great'. But he adds that they are 'not greater than the emergency'. The loudest voices in agricultural journalism and the N.F.U. are not the wisest. The brains, the knowledge and the public spirit of the agricultural world will exert their influence. When we read what Professor Ashby writes to us or look back upon the development of rural opinion during the five years of THE COUNTRYMAN'S existence we cannot but be encouraged. We anticipate an even more marked advance during the next five years. There are signs. We mark the plain speaking of that valuable and dispassionate compendium of the facts of the agricultural situation, 'Land and Life', by Lord Astor and Dr. Keith Murray,† and the sharp criticism of a purely wheat policy and of the N.F.U., not only in this book but in an article in the 'Quarterly Review', and in the writing of all other disinter-

* Routledge, pp. 546, 10*s.* 6*d.*

† Gollancz, pp. 192, 5*s.* Reference may also be made to *Agricultural Depression and Farm Relief in England*, 1815-52, by L. P. Adams, of Cornell University, pp. 192, 6*s.*

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ested authorities. There is also a hardening of the best agricultural opinion on basic points on which THE COUNTRYMAN has laid stress from its first number. The route for the advance of agriculture is mapped. The nation, faced as it is by many vital problems at home and abroad, and alert for the national welfare, as was shown by the prompt payment of income tax, is in no humour to be held back by the dullness and narrowness of a section of an industry which numbers, after all, only about a million of the population. Agriculture is hearing the nation's last word. The nation is growing tired of 'relieving' and propping farming. What is growing in its mind is the necessity for reconstruction from the soil to the shop. That series of considered reports which Mr. Orwin is publishing from the Agricultural Economics Research Institute on the departures from precedent by farmer-thinkers like Mr. A. H. Brown of Hayling Island is as significant as stimulating. *

THE farm-worker must be considered as well as the farmer, or, with the revival of industry, he will move even more quickly into the towns. In our own county the wages of the ordinary farm-hand have just been officially reduced to 28*s*. a week. (Happily not a few farmers are going on paying more.) Can any housewife reader of THE COUNTRYMAN explain how a family may be fed and clothed and have any margin for self-improvement or for the future on such a dole? Or why men and women should consent to stay in the country to make the struggle. Will the unimaginative, unstatesmanlike

* *High Farming*, Clarendon Press, 1*s*.

There is an idea about that a Big Bank is interested only in Big Business. Is that really the case? Surely, the wide variety of localities in which you can see branches of the Westminster Bank should alone be enough to dispel the notion. To all, a banking account supplies a background—a feeling of stability; and those who may have misgivings about opening one with 'so little' are invited to find that their hesitation may have been groundless

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slowing down of rural housing by the Ministry of Health encourage them to do so? One local Rural District Council, with its requirements stated at 118 cottages, has been allowed – 30.

THE COUNTRYMAN enters upon its sixth year justified by experience that in non-Party action lies the hope of getting some of the very best things done that can be done at home or abroad. We could not have a more apt illustration than an overwhelmingly Conservative Government's acknowledgement that the Marketing Act of its predecessors fits the needs of the time. The truth was never stated more felicitously than by the 'Manchester Guardian', in its remarkable tribute to the great editor whose life-work was a stimulus to all journalists: 'The measure of fundamental unity between all honest intellects that are eagerly putting themselves forth upon worthy objects of effort is greater than that between subscribers to any one set of articles of political, religious or artistic faith'.

WE ground our optimism for the future not only on the advance in rural and urban public opinion at home, but on the fact that, as Sir William Layton notices, public opinion in various countries is running ahead of the Governments. The world lives by agriculture, manufacture and commerce. To those who see the world as dependent on its industrial and commercial life alone, no less an authority than the editor of the 'Economist' speaks robustly: 'If the world's trade goes on as it has been going, it will soon be half what it was two years ago.' The problem which confronts the



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intelligence of the world is plainly stated by this hard-headed City man when he asks, 'Are we going to have the wisdom to rebuild the world's economic and political life on a sound international basis or are we going to let each country sink within its own national self?' We may, if we are foolish enough, demand more than, having regard to the pace of human development, can fairly be demanded of the League of Nations and the Disarmament Conference, or, as is wiser, we may be thankful for our mercies – and go on doing our bit. Five years ago what were our utmost hopes? The Far East is distressing, no doubt. But to people who want not only justice for China but something uncomfortable for Japan, we offer a recollection. The Editor of THE COUNTRYMAN was sitting at ease in kimono, at night, in a quiet room of an hotel in a remote prefecture of Japan, in the company of its governor and other notabilities, also in negligé. The frank talk had turned to the eventual prospects of Japan should the situation of the world one day allow of her establishing herself in China. What did 'Sensei' think? 'Sensei', who was not in his fourth year of Orientalization for nothing, pondered a little, and then – the company happened to be drinking tea served in the foreign manner – picked up a lump of sugar. Poising it, he said, 'Japan, 60 millions',* and, as he dropped it into his tea, added, 'China, 400 millions'. The last has not been heard of the Chinese 'Farmers of Forty Centuries,'† and Japan will grow up. Our goodwill and our hopes go

* It is now 84 millions, or more

† The title of Dr. King's famous book on the agriculture of China

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Folk Cookery: Sense and Nonsense

THE English Folk Cookery Association, which has got itself, in Mr. St. John Wright, an active young secretary, and, in Mr. Allan Gomme, a chairman with an hereditary interest in folklore, has found its spiritual home at Simpson's. The monthly dinners and the monthly good fare will confirm adherents in the faith delivered to them by Miss Florence White. If Sir John Lavery, who was at the inaugural dinner, does not this year present the Association with a speaking portrait of this gallant soul he ought never to receive another commission. At that feast the green-pea soup and the boiled turbot and the pigeon pie were of a quality rare indeed in the experience of patrons of some English hotels and restaurants. But it is not enough for the Association to dine. If it is to do any good, it must develop something of the devotion and disinterestedness of its founder. Miss White, who we may as well blurt out is THE COUNTRYMAN'S 'Innkeeper's Daughter', is a Briton in ten thousand. For years, in the most self-sacrificing way, she has given her time and her small substance to rescuing old 'receipts'. To hear that, in some remote place, an aged cook or farmer's wife or an ex-housekeeper had, in her recollection or in a faded memorandum book, a recipe for an old local dish, brought Miss White at once to her door. When Miss White was

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not adventuring about the country in this way she was absorbed at the British Museum or the Bodleian. Miss White is seventy-one. And as she has ever been a helper of lame dogs – her kindly chuckle is a refreshment – she has had no money with which to carry on her studies but what she has made from week to week out of her writing. She is a true and plucky patriot, and she ought to have one of the meatier Civil List pensions. The English Folk Dance Society has shown that we were once and might be again a musical nation. The job of the English Folk Cookery Association is to show that we once knew how to cook and might cook again. Cecil Sharp's disciples of the E.F.D.S. have not yet produced a biography, though we are glad to find Mr. Fox Strangways at work on one; let the E.F.C.A. do itself credit by recognizing that it owes everything to Florence White. She has been the Association. Up to the time of her handing over the secretaryship to Mr. St. John Wright the total funds she had received were a donation from the Editor of THE COUNTRYMAN and one other! As we have said, it is not enough for the Association to dine. It is not enough for it merely to preserve recipes. Its chance is in getting people to take a rational interest, a worthy hygienic and æsthetic interest in cookery and food. Posterity will marvel at our generation being so unintelligent as to leave our food, and therefore our health, efficiency and sanity at the mercy, to so large an extent, of the ignorant and prejudiced. It is sad indeed to think of the impairment and the loss of valuable lives that have followed upon haphazard, unscientific cooking.

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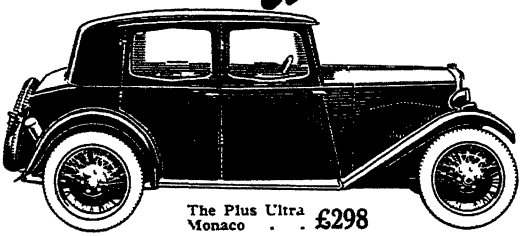
Exhilarating air. Pine forests, hills and lakes



Miles of winding waterways with islands

The Association, if it means to take itself seriously, has its work cut out. Yet it comes before the public when people who have work to do are less and less inclined to over-eat or over-drink. And the value of a larger proportion of uncooked food in our dietary is recognized. Fruit and salads are coming into their own. THE COUNTRYMAN stands not only for fresh food well cooked but for plenty of fruit and salads from our own gardens and market gardens. For our different regions to proclaim the virtues of their local foods – Devon its clotted cream, the West Riding its haverbread and so forth – is excellent. In Japan, at the railway stations, one sees on signboards the names of the foods for which the various districts are famous. These dishes are not only a matter of local satisfaction. They nourish a local industry. We would have our own favoured counties known much more widely and distinctly than they are now for their plums, their salads, their apples, their cherries, their strawberries, their raspberries, their nuts and their early vegetables. Then there is the marketing of these good things at a price which the housewife may reckon reasonable. It is a scandal that last year fruit should have been left to drop from trees and bushes. All the blame for this cannot be put on foreign imports. Producers who hurried off wagons of their stuff to the towns and sold it direct did well. And if a number of them had acted together they would have done better. But it is idle to suppose that the first-class grower will always be the first-class business man. Therefore, as rural co-operative experience has abundantly proved in Holland and Den-

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mark, there must be combination to provide fruit and vegetable growers with selling experience and selling machinery.

As It Seems to Some of Us

To be a Seeker is to be the next best Sect to a Finder, and such an one shall every faithful humble Seeker be at the end. Happy Seeker, Happy Finder! – *Cromwell*

From the Poet Laureate

IT was naturally a great encouragement, after the publication of our first number, to receive from Thomas Hardy the message which ever since we have proudly displayed on the cover of THE COUNTRYMAN. For our present issue, our fifth birthday number, this honourable commendation is joined by another, for, in renewing his subscription, or rather two subscriptions, the Poet Laureate is kind enough to write: 'I believe I have been a reader since THE COUNTRYMAN began. I prefer it to any other periodical, and always read it through with delight. All good wishes to you!' There could hardly be better judges of what a review of rural life should be than Thomas Hardy and John Masefield.

Independent Rural Journalism

THE value of a periodical of rural life depends on its independence, on its being able to print what it likes and to speak its mind freely. Those of our readers who know something of the heavy cost of producing a publication of good quality will be pleased to see the independence of THE COUNTRY-

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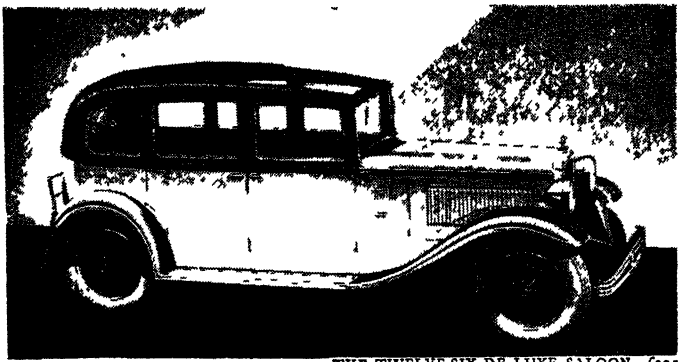
Service Advertising M.P.A.1c

MAN maintained by the commercial patronage which reflects its value as an advertising medium. They will also congratulate themselves that this advertising patronage has made it possible for the pages of reading matter to have been, every year, in excess of that of the previous year. The number of advertising pages has increased remarkably from issue to issue, although – and to some extent, no doubt, because – we have steadily declined or avoided announcements of a character which we did not think to be in keeping with the spirit of THE COUNTRYMAN. The value of this excluded publicity amounts to several hundred pounds.

A Reminiscence

AT a time when Japan has not been making the best of impressions, and has aroused doubts as to the proportion of her leading men responsive to modern ideas, we may set down a happy recollection of the late Jonnuske Inouye, the ex-Finance Minister, whose useful life has just been ended by an assassin. The Editor of THE COUNTRYMAN had done his 6,000 miles of travelling through rural Japan, and was taking leave of Inouye, who was then president of the Yokohama Specie Bank. Suddenly Inouye said, 'If you will stay here and edit a review I will give [you 10,000 yen (about £1,000) and I will not come on any committee or take shares because you will be founding what will be not only a periodical but something in the nature of a church'. This excellent man had come to understand that journalism can have other aims than money-making and that something can be done to bring about a

AS. DEPENDABLE. AS. AN. AUSTIN



THE TWELVE-SIX DE LUXE SALOON, £225

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The Twelve-Six

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better understanding between East and West. But the 'church' got itself started, not in Japan but in England! 'One has no right to run a paper without preaching', said Katherine Mansfield; 'the only sort of paper is an out-and-out personal, dead sincere paper.'

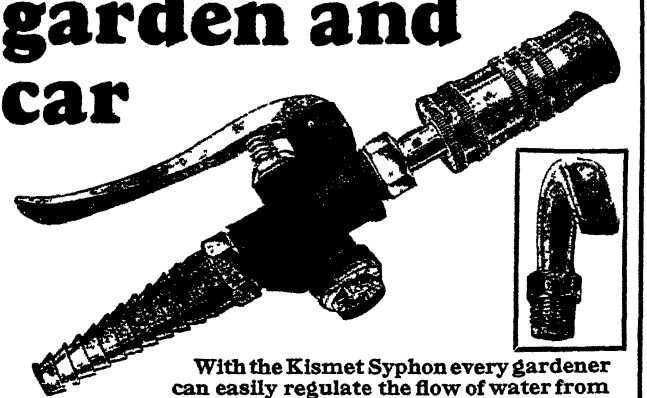
How Sky Advertising Can be Stopped

THERE is a very simple way to stop sky advertising. The Newspaper Proprietors' Association, representing the chief papers in Great Britain, has only to intimate that the Press will not accept the announcements of firms who adopt sky advertising.

M.D.

HOW many of us are mentally deficient? According to the verbatim report of a speaker at the yearly meeting of the Scottish Educational Institute there are a million mentally deficient people in Scotland. This seems hard on a country of 4,800,000 which has been credited with wits. Then a teacher, speaking at the conference of women teachers at Southend, used the phrase '340,000 mental defectives in the country'. The Mental Deficiency Committee estimated that there are 300,000 mental defectives in England and Wales, not counting those defective 'in an educational sense'. This figure related to those who would be classed as mentally defective by reason of their minds not having reached a normal degree of development. Over and above this number of mental defectives there is the large group of mentally subnormal persons. It may be that the Scottish speaker had this large group in mind.

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With the Kismet Syphon every gardener can easily regulate the flow of water from his hose, from a strong, long distance jet to a medium spray suitable for lawns, flower beds and so on, or to a fine misty spray needed for seedlings.

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An interesting feature, where the water is charged on the quantity used, is the one-hand control of the Kismet Syphon by which water is instantly shut off or turned on by releasing or pressing a simple hand-grip control – avoiding all wastage.

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Obtainable at any garage or from the sole manufacturers and patentees

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But who is in a position to say what proportion of the population is mentally subnormal? It was estimated by the Committee that not more than ten per cent of the sub-normal group is certifiable.

White Marble in Churchyards

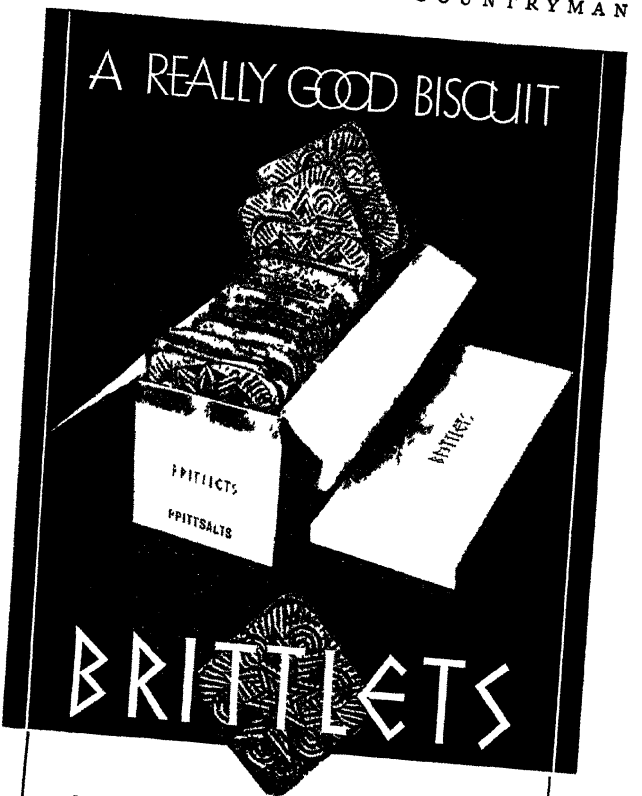
THE rector of Byfleet, Lieut.-Colonel the Rev. F. J. Cheverton, now makes this announcement in his parish magazine:

> Permission to admit WHITE MARBLE in any shape or form, whether as memorial stones, flower vases, chippings, &c., will be entirely withdrawn from this date. The same restriction will also apply to other alien stone. Granite, if admitted, must not be polished.

He also intimates that 'the nearest-of-kin will be quite free to apply for a faculty to admit a white marble memorial, etc., and I shall not oppose its being granted'. A safe enough promise, we hope.

More Governmental Uglifying of the Countryside

WHAT does the Ministry of Health mean by sending out to Rural District Councils' sanitary inspector-surveyors, plans for cottages without elevations? The result will simply be still more uglifying of the countryside under the direct auspices of the Ministry responsible for regional planning! On regional planning we hope Sir Hilton Young is going to stand no nonsense from members of his own Party who have weakened the Planning Bill. The requirements of the Bill are not a bit in excess of the needs of the situation. They might be stiffer. It is to the credit of the Labour Party that Sir Stafford Cripps should have taken so strong a line in support of this Bill.



Something new—something better, a biscuit which is excellent with cheese or butter—so delightfully crisp and dainty. Brittsalts are also good with wine and are made in Savoury form for Cocktails.

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EPISTLES FROM AN OLD HOMESTEAD
10. *WHAT HOTEL CAN ONE GO TO?*

Perhaps we are both mistaken – *Voltaire*

THERE is a significance in the articles in THE COUNTRYMAN by Mr. S. B. Russell, of that famous hostelry, the Lygon Arms, at Broadway, on 'How I Turned Innkeeper', the inclusion, in the 'Rural Authors' series in the last number, of Mr. John Fothergill, whose experiences at the Spread Eagle at Thame have produced such an interesting book, the references to Thomas Burke's 'English Inns', and the contribution by the proprietor of the Crown and Thistle at Abingdon, which, I understand, is to appear in the present issue. They reflect the interest which we all take in the subject of good hotels for the countryside, particularly just now when most people want to spend their holidays at home instead of abroad. But how is the good inn to be found? We may fall back on the A.A. list with its system of stars. While we appreciate the general guidance they offer, many of us who have sampled starred hotels have had our surprises. The fact is that the A.A. has to furnish a list of hotels for places that its members are likely to visit, and that the gradings are the best the A.A. can do with the material at its disposal.

THE real reasons for inefficiency in hotels cannot be too thoroughly discussed. Is it lack of knowledge of food and cookery? Is it lack of an aptitude for and knowledge of inn-keeping? Is it irregularity of business – that is seasonal patronage? Is it a



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dearth of the right type of servants who are neither fussy nor servile? Mr. Fothergill says the requirements for keeping a good inn are: '14–16 hours a day; some capital with which to have good food ready and to waste; a mind for the tiniest details; an all-round outlook; an ability to formulate a policy and courage to carry it out; to have had first a good time in life oneself; and a natural, not enforced love of the job'.

IN his new book, 'Gone Abroad', Mr. George Graves, who ought to know something about foreign hotels, tells their secret. 'Nearly all German hotels are owned by individual proprietors who have gone right through the business, from kitchen-boy upwards, under the eagle eye of their fathers. They, in turn, have put their sons through it, and then, having sent them for a year or two to America and England to see how their best clients live when at home, instal them in a responsible position in their own hotel. In this way a tradition of hotel-keeping is handed down from one generation to the next, with the result that one gets the most marvellous personal attention and personal service. Either the proprietor or his son will be walking round the tables at luncheon and dinner, greeting guests and making them feel at home. There is all the difference in the world between that and a company-run hotel.'

WHEN I asked Mr. Russell he delivered himself as follows: 'One point to be borne in mind is that you cannot have a standard visitor. What pleases or satisfies one visitor may fail to satisfy

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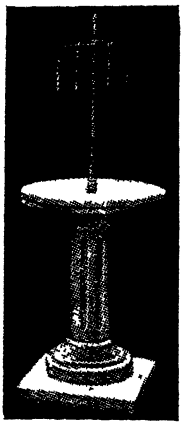
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another. One visitor may think most of food, another of his bed, a third of the sanitary accommodation. Then one visitor may arrive in robust health and in the humour to be easily satisfied. Another may come on a wet day and be tired and difficult to please. Then an hotel may be excellent ordinarily, but on one or two days of the year, owing to exceptional difficulties, things may not run as usual. Is it possible to expect an inn to be perfect in the eyes of everyone? Must not allowance be made also for sudden changes in management or ownership?'

IN fairness, let me add the complaint made to me by the proprietor of a well-known seaside hotel. He is distracted between the decision to maintain his standard of service and to meet 'the unreasonable demands of visitors who insist on lower terms to meet the depression'. 'It is noticeable', he said, 'that the people who press for lower and yet lower terms on the ground of poverty and distress arrive in good cars, many of them new'.

I AM not surprised that the Food Education Society should have got out a pamphlet in praise of honey in place of sugar. Just now, when so many efforts are being made to promote economy-cum-efficiency, honey and honey production cannot be too warmly commended. While sugar has to be converted by digestion before it can be absorbed, honey is absorbed at once and carries with it a certain proportion of body-building and tissue-repairing elements. If it did not, how could bees live on it exclusively? I am not among those who



Tel. Puttenham 2

Don't tell your gardener

that you have ordered a little food table for the birds. He may not understand. Keep it to yourself, near your window; for birds are very good company.

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are afraid of a slight rise in the price of sugar. Far more sugar is consumed than is needed for nutrition and health. The figures are something like 90 lbs per head per year against 51 for Germany, 47 for France and 19 for Italy. If people masticated more they would produce sugar out of starch. The late Mr. William Graham did good service in pointing out that, while much stress is ordinarily laid on the fact that £650 millions or so are spent in a year on intoxicants, tobacco and betting, as much as £50 millions goes in sweets. Many women have found that when there is plenty of honey in the house the demand for sugar goes down. The Biblical author of 'Eat thou honey because it is good' knew what he was writing about.

THE vegetarian has always had compunctious visitings about using the by-products of butchery, particularly leather. He has now salved his conscience with a formula. By wearing leather shoes he is helping to create a shortage in leather! For does not a periodical of the trade, the American 'Leather Manufacturer', complain that 'people are eating less meat and the number of cattle and the supply of pelts is not increasing in proportion to the population'? In the very first issue of THE COUNTRYMAN a correspondent drew attention to this weak point – for a distant future – in more-and-more-livestock-for-British-agriculture propaganda. Year by year a larger number of people are definitely eating less meat. But the leather manufacturers have still a few hides to get on with. In the United States they seem to tan about 136,000,000 in a twelve-

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month. According to figures which may or may not be up to date, Great Britain markets 10,000,000, and, it will be a surprise to many people to learn, India double that number. One thought will be common to decent people, meat-eaters and non-meat-eaters, that the enormous slaughter of animals for food which goes on in the modern world imposes the obligation that nothing shall be left undone to compel the adoption of the most humane methods of killing. There can be no question that there is in the countryside, in one direction and another, much avoidable ill-usage of animals.

AN argument against vegetarianism, beyond the fact that it would be difficult to do without leather, has been that the market grower must have manure as well as artificials. Years before the War, as I wrote at the time, Mr. Richard Maurice demonstrated in the Channel Islands that it was possible to produce tomatoes for the London market by means of a synthetic manure, and from a well-known centre of agricultural investigation, chemicals for producing manure from waste have been forthcoming for years past. Now in view of the increasing scarcity of horse manure, which was once in transit by road and rail in immense quantities between town and country, it is suggested that the steady extension of electric power cables throughout the countryside makes it possible for many market gardeners and small-holders to use an electric soil-heating system. Such a system is well known in Norway and Sweden, where electric power is notoriously cheap. In glass-work a six-hours appli-

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think of. Then [illegible].

J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT

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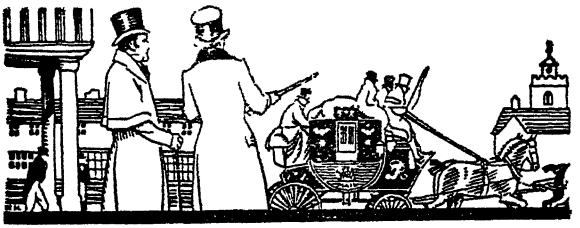
From

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ADDRESS

cation of current is held to be enough. In Norway and Sweden soil-heating is also being employed in the open for early potatoes. This is a hint of future possibilities in the development of the cultivation of the soil. A few scientists have talked of synthetic food. A likelier development seems to be electrical heating of the soil. Just as we now get so much of our food at secondhand by way of meat, the resources of science would be employed, not in a first-hand manufacturing of artificial food, but in causing food crops to grow as they had never grown before. As things are at present, the farmer can warm his soil by removing some of the water, by burying manure, and by laying ridges in such a direction that the maximum amount of soil may become warmed. Electricity has been employed hitherto in three ways only. There has been 'shocking' of crops, as described in an early COUNTRYMAN article, 'Aerials for Arable'. On the Continent, and to some extent in this country, some electric power ploughing has been done. Further, Crowther and Haines have reduced the draught in ploughing by passing a current generated by the tractor through the soil, so lubricating, as explained in Sir John Russell's new book, the mould board by the deposited water film.

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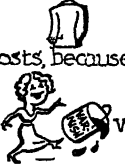
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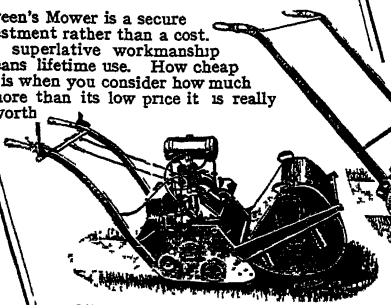
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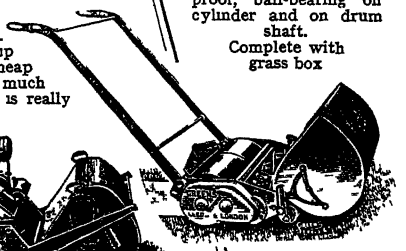
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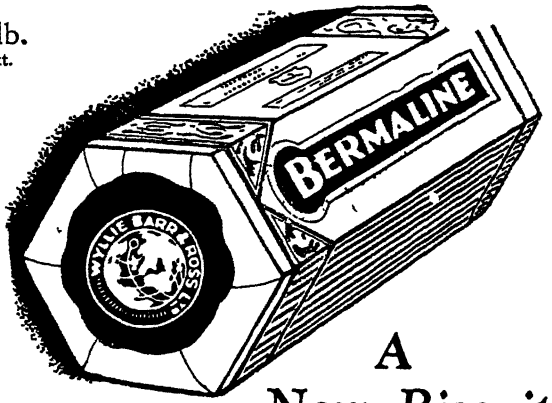
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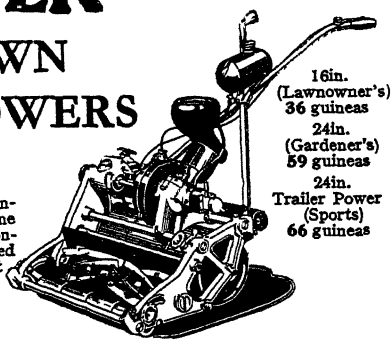
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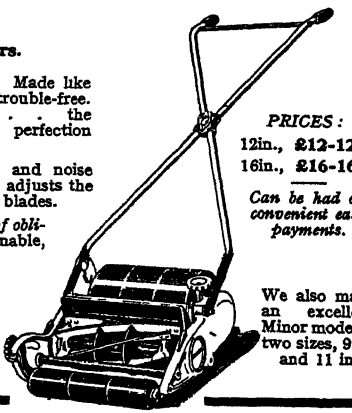
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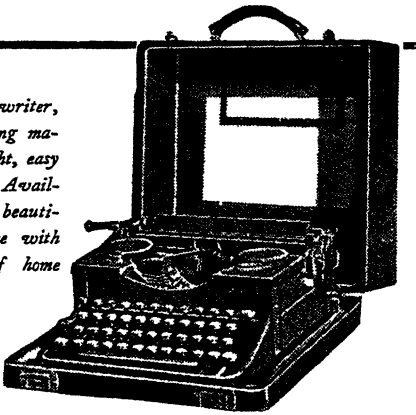
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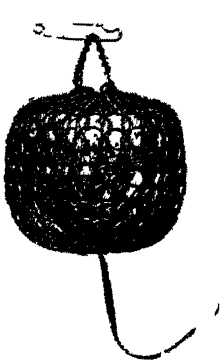
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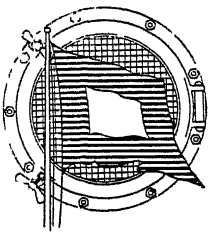
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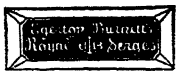
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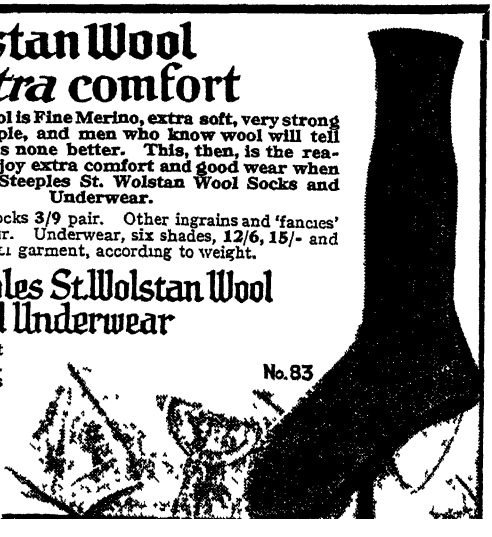
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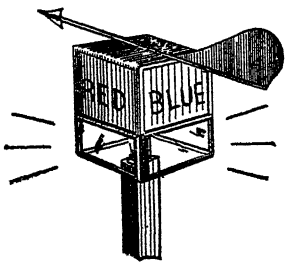
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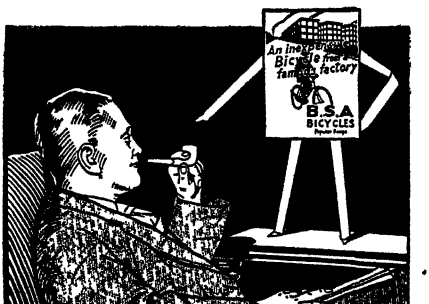
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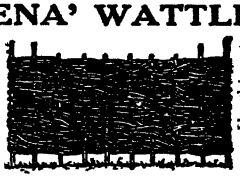
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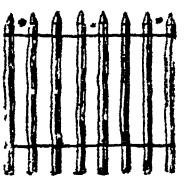


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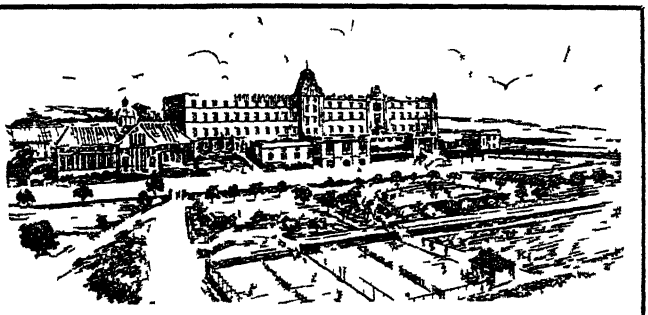
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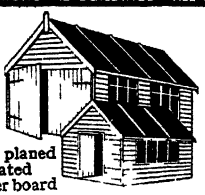
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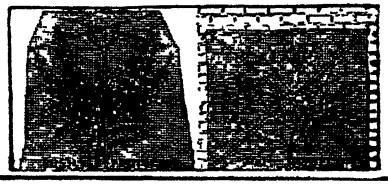
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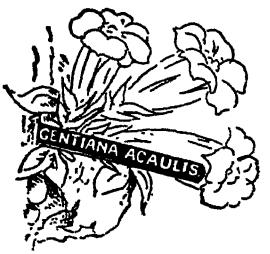


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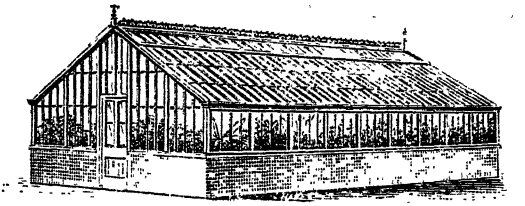
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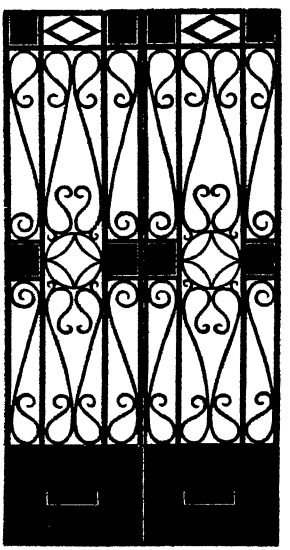
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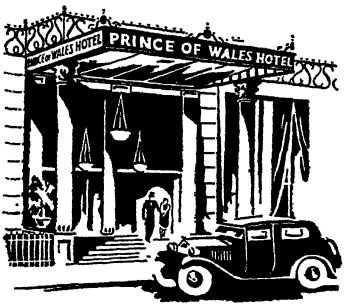
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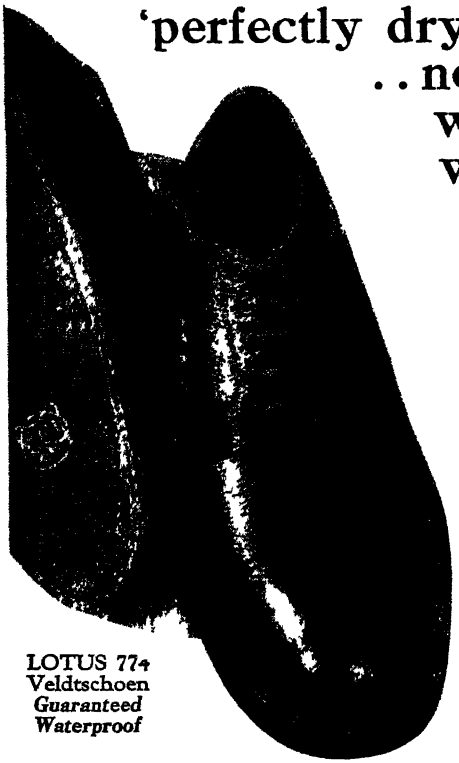
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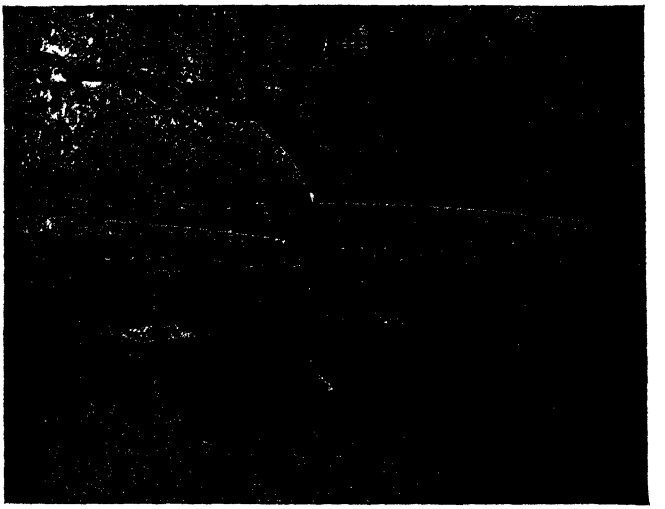
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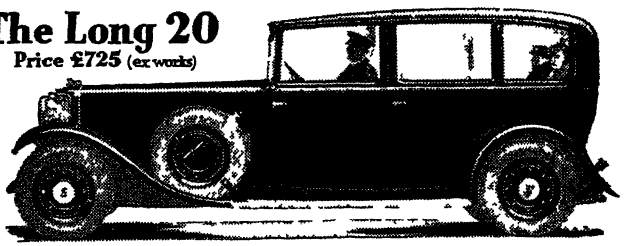
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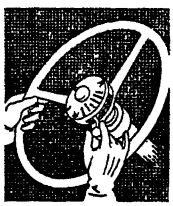
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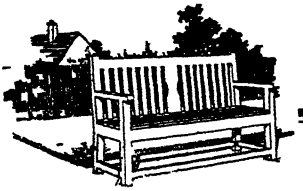
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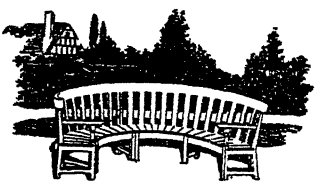
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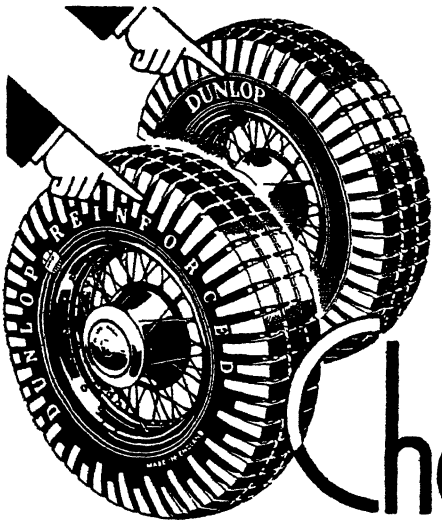
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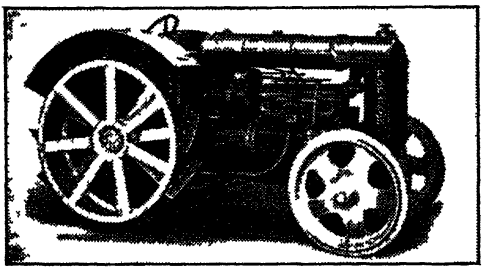
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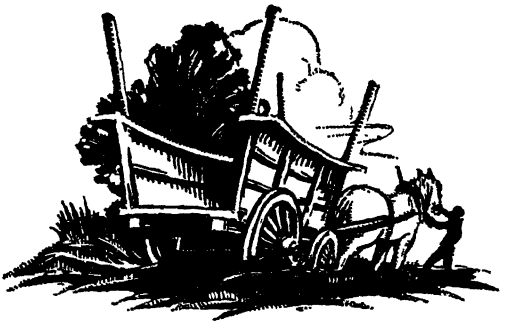
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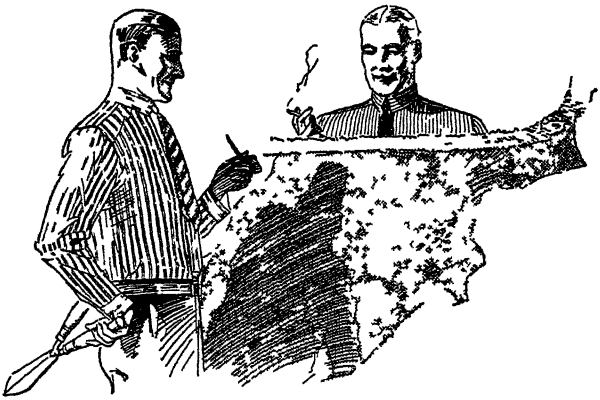
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O more than happy countryman if only he knew his good fortune!—*Virgil*

Vol. VI. No. 2 2*s.* 6*d.* quarterly July 1932

My Cottage Garden

by the Rt. Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain

MY own cottage and garden in Sussex are, alas! mine no longer, though I am glad to know that they have passed to the possession of another garden lover who cherishes the little garden as I used to do. The cottage stands where two lanes meet. Its framework, if you could see it, is exactly like that of the farmer's great barn opposite – huge oak timbers such as went to the building of the old wooden navy, some straight or bent with age, some curved by the natural growth of the tree, but all hewed and squared with the axe and adze; no saw or plane has spoiled their beauty. Between the balks of timber it is wattle and daub, but one side has been clapboarded against the south-westerly storms and the opposite one, facing the lane, is half-brick half-tile. The old tile roof sags and wavers with the yielding of the beams. Just to the

right of the cottage and shadowing the north-west corner is a magnificent old yew. As we pass in through the little wicket gate and up the short brick path, you will see, in spring, hyacinths or polyanthus in the narrow borders on either side, to be followed later by some bedding-out plants – almost the only ones I allow myself, for the garden is to need as little labour as possible – out of which will rise in turn two healthy groups of scarlet martagon lilies and another group of the new hybrid martagons which tempted me at one of the Royal Horticultural Society's shows. Over the front of the house ampelopsis and wistaria creep, a pyrocanthus breaks the line and cotoneaster horizontalis, beloved of the bees, half hides an ugly water-spout; but what I pride myself upon is the narrow border, scarcely a foot wide, which runs along the house. Snowdrops (Elwesii) and winter aconite give me my first flowers here; then comes a clump or two of narcissus; but the moment to see it is when it is one mass of anemone apennina with primula cashmeriana thrusting up its purple globes among their blue stars.

Under the yew tree, by adding some good soil and plenty of old mortar rubble, I have flourishing colonies of cyclamen coum for spring and cyclamen europeum for autumn, when its scent carries me in fancy to Italian woods about Bologna where I have picked great bunches of them to brighten up the old Brun's hotel. Hepaticas, our own wild wood anemones and crocuses, help out the seasons. But come round to the southerly side of the cottage. Here against the clapboarding grows wistaria again,

but the nurseryman sent one so pale in hue that it scarcely shows against the white paint and reminds me that flowering plants should be selected when they are in flower. A good Pyrus japonica gives on the other hand a blaze of colour and a purple clematis, which I cut down nearly to within a foot of the ground, is covered with blossom twice in the summer. The yellow jasmine nudiflorum flowers in January with iris stylosa at its feet and a white jasmine scents the rooms in mid-summer. Here too I find room for Carpenteria californica and choysia and the Californian fuschia (Zauschneria).

The flagged terrace is supported by a low wall of loose stone not more than two to three feet high. Amidst the flags grow thyme and pinks (D. deltoides and graniticus) campanula pusilla, hypericum coris; grape hyacinths and other things have found their way along the cracks from the narrow ribbon border that tops the low wall.

The border at the top of the wall is kept for low and early flowering plants. Here you will find Iris pumila in four or five shades, I. histrioides and reticulata and tulipa clusiana and linifolia with mossy saxifrages to follow. There are just two bushes of Daphne mezerium to break the low line, and a fine specimen of D. cneorum, which later loads the air with its scent of honey, and a little bush of plumbago larpentae carry on the interest later in the year. The wall itself is kept mainly for saxifrages of the pyramidalis type which did extraordinarily well, but the male fern has seeded itself in the crevices and threatens to become a nuisance.

I know nothing more lovely among tulips for the

rock garden than the two species which I have mentioned. The scarlet linifolia increased with me and I grew it from seed, but T. clusiana had a sad tendency to 'dwindgle', as a farm-hand I once knew used to say of his young turkeys. I retain, however, a warm affection for it, which is partly a tribute to its own delicate beauty and partly to my own vanity.

When I first went to Geneva, in early March, 1925, to represent Great Britain on the Council of the League of Nations, I visited Dr. Correvon's famous Alpine garden. It was too early for flowers but a gardener loves to see plants growing only one degree less than to see them blossoming. Whilst walking round I happened to remark upon a group of T. clusiana whose leaves were pushing up, though the buds were not yet showing. Later the same day an English lady went to see the garden and Dr. Correvon mentioned my visit. 'Ah!' said the lady, 'you have had the Minister for Foreign Affairs here? It is a great honour for your garden.'

'Minister of Foreign Affairs, pooh!' exclaimed the Doctor. 'There is a Minister of Foreign Affairs in every country, but there is only one who can identify Tulipa clusiana by its leaves.'

The story spread (shall I confess? I helped to spread it) and my reputation was made. There was one subject at least of which I knew more than my colleagues!

A second terrace, grassed this time and supported by a rather higher wall, finds room in the border at the top for half-a-dozen species of Cistus. These lasted through several winters, but it is wise to take cuttings every year or two and nurse them through

the winter in a frame lest a spell of specially hard weather destroy the established plants. Here I had a bit of luck. I thought this would be a good place to put a plant of Hypericum (Hookeri, I think) in my first autumn and found when I dug my hole that I was among roots which in my inexperience I did not recognize. They turned out to be a darkish orange Alstroemeria and grew up through and around the Hypericum, making a colour combination on which I received many compliments.

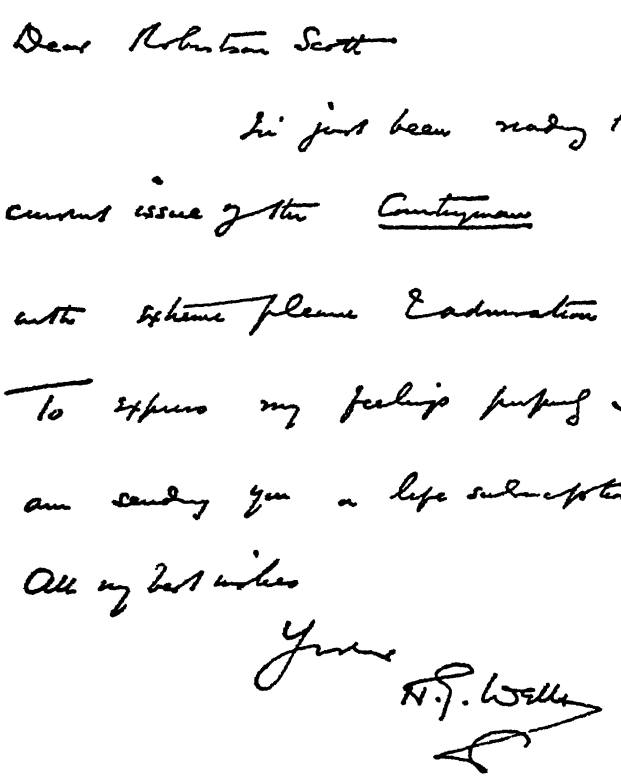
The wall below this terrace was kept mainly for aubretia, alyssum, helianthemums and erodiums, but some white foxgloves seeded themselves between the stones towards one end.

I am not going to show you my rose-garden in front of the oast house, for it was not very successful, nor my border of flowering shrubs and trees, for though I dug the whole of it (and it lay on a belt of stiff clay) three times over with my own hands in one year, I could never rid it of the squitch, bindweed, ground elder and all the other poisonous weeds with brittle ramping roots which had taken hold of it in war time. I have only one word of advice to give to anyone so situated. Clear the border, summon all your patience, disregard appearances and plant potatoes on the ground till you have got it clean; and do this before, not after, your cherries, pyrus, crabs, lilacs, berberis and the like have begun to grow and make shapely bushes or trees. Once that has happened, you will never have the heart to disturb them. By the thorough policy you will eradicate the weeds. Nor need we linger at the herbaceous border. Let us go straight to my rock

garden, or, as I would have you call it, my Alpine garden, for my purpose was to grow the Alpine flowers, not merely to repeat the aubretias and alyssums of the wall.

(*To be continued*)

A MESSAGE



Great-Grandmother goes to Dorset

HAPPILY for readers of THE COUNTRYMAN, *the author of the following 'Journal', written* 137 *years ago, deemed travelling from the Isle of Wight to Dorset an adventure worthy of careful record. The two travellers, aunt and niece, were both named Sarah Dawson. The Journal has been found among old papers by the great-granddaughter of the 'Master James Conway' of Hatchlands who was the younger brother of the Mrs. Petty of Chantmarle.*

The 'Journal' is before us in its faded writing of the style favoured before the introduction of the Italian hand of which a characteristic example is to be seen in the signature of Queen Victoria. We have substituted for the inscription on the old exercise book a title which identifies the generation in which the MS. was written.

MY Aunt and myself left the Isle of Wight July 1st, 1795, with the intention of visiting Mr. and Mrs. Petty who reside in Dorset. Mr. Memfield kindly invited us to the accommodations of their House, as we passed through Southampton, which we accepted, and being rather fatigued with crossing the water, we felt relieved from the Interruptions of an Inn.

After a good night's rest, we arose early, and accompanied our Friends to the Silk Manufactory, which is extremely curious. We could have passed a considerable time attending to a scene of such real Cheerfulness and Industry. A great many Children were employ'd in winding the Silk, who, with

countenances that denoted the advantage of Early Rising and activity, were singing the blythest airs as they nimbly turned the wheel. Not having seen anything of the kind before, it was with some reluctance that our attention was called away. The coach was preparing for Salisbury, and we were presently conducted to it.

The morning was beautifully serene, and the country thro' which we were conveyed, appeared very delightful. The Effect of the Sun's rising on the opposite Shore, was really enchanting, as in many places it resembl'd beams of Fire, while its soften'd radiance through the Water appear'd like glittering gems! An old Lady was our companion, who inform'd us that she was just return'd from Portsmouth, where affection had called her to mourn over the remains of a belov'd Son. The loss of the *Boyn*, a Ship of 98 guns, is at present in the recollection of most, and the description of it must have impress'd every feeling mind; but to hear the dreadful scene so pathetically related by this venerable Parent could not fail to excite the tenderest emotions! Humanity claimed the Tear, and the beauties of surrounding objects were, for awhile, absorb'd in painful reflections. To sympathise with the distress'd is undoubtedly the first law of Nature, and, if in our power to administer comfort, a duty we owe to all. It was, therefore, my endeavour to rouse this good Woman's attention by representing the unforeseen hardships her Son might have been expos'd to had Providence spar'd his Life; since he was render'd a Cripple by attempting to leave the Ship! These motives, which I found had in

some degree operated on her own mind, led her to exclaim: 'It was the will of Heav'n,' and she trusted that 'the same hand which had afflicted, would again restore to comfort.' On our entering Romsey, the good Lady's face began to brighten as she inform'd us her errand to that place was to call upon her Daughter, who had some years been marrried to a Tradesman that was settled there, and altho' they were not in affluent circumstances, they were 'good, comfortable, and happy'. 'That', added she, 'is better than all the riches of the world'.

Having alighted while the Horses were exchanged we re-entered the Coach with two Gentlemen and a Female of more sprightly appearance than the former, who seemed to be perfectly familiar with the several places through which we passed, and would have given us the history of more than we wished to be acquainted with. Our attention was for some time devoted to her loquacity, when subjects of a more serious nature were introduced. The distresses of the Poor, the calamities they were exposed to in consequence of the present War, also the variety of taxes occasioned by it, etc., afforded an ample field for discussion until the rattling of the coach informed us we had entered Salisbury.

After taking leave of our travelling companions and securing our Boxes, we called at Mr. Banks' in Catherine Street. That family we found busily employ'd in attending to domestic concerns ; after some little apology, however, we enjoyed a delightful repast around their social board. Mr. B. kindly offered to secure our places in the Coach, and went to the Inn with that intention, but to our Mortifica-

tion soon returned with the information that every seat was engaged, and we were prevailed on to pass the ensuing evening under his hospitable roof. The weather being favorable for walking we went to call on Mr. and Mrs. W., our respectable Quaker friends, who also kindly invited us to pass the day with them, and we were conducted into a most delightful garden. It is indeed a charming retreat, and a peculiar sweetness distinguishes every part of it, a River on one side with the graceful Willow bending o'er its edge, a walk on the other, with Sweetbriars, Jessamine and Honeysuckles that were planted so as to form a kind of natural Bower in which some little romantic seats were placed, afforded a delightful Shade, and it was with considerable reluctance that we left the enchanting spot, altho' a fine Hare, etc., claimed our attention on the table.

After dinner we had an hour's friendly and improving conversation. Yet being in an uncertainty with respect to our future proceedings, it obliged us to take an early leave of these worthy People, and, on our return to Catherine Street, Mr. Banks attended us to the Cathedral, and we had an opportunity of seeing the Bishop's Throne and admiring the Altar piece. The latter is a prodigious fine painting on glass, and from the disposition of light it produces a wonderful effect! After walking some time in this magnificent building, we proceeded to Mr. B.'s, who, by way of diversifying the scene, introduced us into an extensive garden and treated us with delicious strawberries.

The Ladies, on our return, soon produced the tea equipage, and, it being our intention to proceed on our journey the next day, we left them at an early hour, and by sleeping at the Inn we expected to be in readiness for the first Coach which started in the morning. Mr. B. however informed us that there was a Gentleman, with whom some of his friends were acquainted, who had, like us, been waiting several days for a Conveyance. He would 'if agreeable to the Ladies be glad to take part of a Post Chaise with them'. The next morning, Mr. B. introduced him to us. Accordingly our little matters were soon adjusted, and we bade adieu to Salisbury. We soon learnt that this Gentleman's name was Spencer, that he was on his route to Weymouth, whence he intended to proceed to Jersey. He was very communicative and, having been an extensive Traveller his conversation was both pleasing and instructive. To this good Man we were indebted for many little attentions which rendered the journey and rainy day more agreeable, and he very politely expressed a regret at our parting. Our arrival at Chantmarle was rather unexpected, as, from some unaccountable mistake, the letter that was to have apprised our friends of it, did not arrive so soon as ourselves. After taking some refreshment and looking a little around us, we felt inclined to rest, yet, nothwithstanding our propensity to sleep, we could not ascend the venerable Staircase without stopping to view its ancient structure. The more than half-worn stones and folding doors, inspired reverence, awe and Serious reflections, and, having acknowledged the pro-

tection we experienced on our journey and remembered with fond affection our distant friends who were equally interested in our safety, 'tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep', never came more welcome to the weari'd Traveller.

The night passed off in agreeable slumber, and In the morning we were awaked by the melody of Birds who seemed to congratulate our arrival at Chantmarle House. From having been accustomed several preceding days to early rising, we awoke at the usual hour, and surprised our waiting friends at breakfast, who imagined that the fatigues of travelling would have kept us silent till a later hour. After some agreeable conversation, a walk into the garden was proposed, which abounds with every charm to delight the eye and regale the appetite. The finest vegetables owe their cultivation to the Master of the House, while the flowers, of which there are great variety, claim the attention of his fair companion.

(To be continued)

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Peasants of Oxfordshire & Gloucestershire—I. *'The Killer'*

'Butcher Green,' George Green, of whom Thomas Derrick has made a drawing for THE COUNTRYMAN, *gave up his 'killing' in* 1916. *He had gone about from place to place butchering. He is now an accomplished smallholder with land and stock in admirable condition. He has shorn forty ewes daily on six consecutive days, and once fifty in one day 'between the lights.' He has cut an acre of wheat in a day with a hook and 'stocked' it, his wife drawing the bonds and tieing it. In the intervals of working for himself he does mowing, harvesting and fruit and potato gathering.*


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Horace Plunkett

by Sir Daniel Hall, F.R.S.,

Chairman of the Horace Plunkett Foundation

THERE will have been no reader of THE COUNTRYMAN who did not feel a sense of personal loss when he heard of the death of Sir Horace Plunkett on Easter Eve. For more than forty years Plunkett stood as the personification of all movements for the improvement of country life, not of co-operation merely, but of co-operation as providing the method by which a rural society with its own culture could be built up. I will not attempt to recount the long story of his public service. I would rather try to recall the man as I knew him.

First, it must be remembered that he was born of one of the oldest pre-Cromwellian families of the Pale, of a house which had given many distinguished men to Ireland. To this we may perhaps attribute his quiet dignity and surety of himself, a dignity that was free from vanity and needed no assertion. Considerations of health sent him to America soon after he left Oxford, and there he ranched for ten years and acquired fortune enough to enable him to come back to Ireland for his life's work. Incidentally he also acquired a fund of humorous instances with which he could aptly illuminate a meeting that was trailing off into platitude. His American experiences with his cowboys may have helped him to his habit of talking to all and sundry, peasant and Cabinet minister, as one man to another. On his return he dedicated



Horace Plunkett

A sketch made for THE COUNTRYMAN *by Anton van Anrooy, R I, in* 1927

himself to finding the common cause on which he could unite all creeds and parties in Ireland, still seething with memories of the land war and the bitterness aroused by Parnell's fall.

By the time I came to see much of him he had a faithful following round him: Father Finlay, Jesuit and Professor of Political Economy, Vice-President of the Irish Agricultural Organization Society, R. A. Anderson, the ever faithful secretary of the society, Harry Norman, Miss Skepworth, and not least Æ, whom we found later in an upper chamber of Plunkett House, entrenched behind a wall of newspapers, speaking as an oracle from a cloud of beard and tobacco smoke, through which one dimly saw the faery figures he had painted on the walls. And when Plunkett had an address to deliver or a book was going to press Plunkett House would be in a quiver, every man and woman in the place pressed into some service whereby the perfect text should be assured. I was his Recorder when he was President of the Agricultural section of the British Association at its Dublin meeting in 1906. His address was to be one of the star turns; it had been under discussion between us all the spring and summer but the night before its delivery I was barely able to drag him away to the dinner party he was giving, and leave a distraught secretary to put together the sections of MS. ranged round the room and to sit up with the printer until day-break so that copies should be ready for the meeting in the morning. Even then he interrupted the delivery of his address to whisper to me that I must on no account allow the copies to be distributed

for he had thought of an improvement to one passage.

In a professional sense Plunkett was no writer, and yet by dint of infinite pains his books — 'Ireland in the new Century', 'Rural Life in the United States' and 'Noblesse Oblige' – were examples of lucid reasoning and eloquent of his convictions. Equally he was no speaker, however happy in an occasional repartee, and one could not regard him as a born administrator; for an Irishman an indifferent conversationalist, capable at times of boring you. He had none of the stigmata of leadership and yet he was a great leader, just because he was wholly single-minded, devoted to his cause without any secondary interest to gratify, not even the vanity which impels some men to greatness. As prophet he was abundantly stoned, driven out of Parliament by his own Unionists, driven out of the Vice-Presidency of the Council by the Nationalists, his house burnt by the wilder Republicans after the war. And yet he was universally beloved; it was his un-Irish habit of getting men of all parties to work together that the fanatics could not tolerate. All these buffetings he took without complaint, permitting himself even to his friends no more than some gently cynical humorous comment.

Perhaps the loss of his house touched him most nearly; after that he made his home in England. For he had built Kilteragh so that he could gather his friends round him and entertain the many visitors who came to study his work of regeneration in Ireland. And strange indeed were some of these

gatherings with a bachelor host tender to the weaknesses of some of his old retainers. Plunkett, too, had a habit of rising at five in the morning to work, with the result that he frankly fell asleep as soon as he had shepherded his guests into the drawing-room. I am mindful of one such occasion when some wild man egged on Commandatore Boni to read Dante in the original to the largish party assembled — the Commandatore declaiming on the hearthrug to a semi-circle of more or less prostrate forms, save for the enthusiast who had let loose the torrent and had at least to pretend to be following, and in the background a dark Hindoo man of science, open eyed and gravely tolerant of these incomprehensible Westerners.

Yes, Plunkett loved his sunny wind-swept house of Kilteragh; there was a period when he had to live reclining in an open cabin that was perched on the top of the tower but could be rotated to keep its back to the wind, and sitting with him there you learnt something of the winds that sweep off the mountains across to Dublin Bay. One of the features of Kilteragh was its miniature golf course which took you from lawn to lawn across garden paths and yew hedges, just short mashie shot holes with a flower bed where you would have liked to drop your ball. Plunkett had taken to golf medicinally but he enjoyed a not too scratch foursome like a boy out of school, and if he was but an indifferent performer on the links proper he would with great glee take a shilling off the most accomplished players after a round of his 'old man's course' at Kilteragh. Golf was the only game I have known

him play, he had long ceased to hunt, and he neither shot nor fished; but he was an ardent motorist from motoring's earliest days. Fine driver as he was, a journey with him between the high walls which line the twisting roads round Dublin was apt to be a nervous experience, especially if he was engaging you in a fierce argument while at the wheel. But he really had in mind the injunction he impressed on his chauffeur, 'Drive round every corner as if as big a fool as yourself was coming the other way'. Eventually at the age of seventy-five he learnt to fly.

Alas, all these details are but the trivial accidents of the man; still, his play, in its simplicity, breaking in upon his incessant work, was of a piece with the way he would lighten some solemn discussion with one of his gentle jests. That was indeed the man — humour, gentleness and courtesy clothing absolute courage and a steely determination to use himself for his one purpose. He thought evil of no man and however faithful to his old loyalties he was tolerant of the new freedoms of youth. He was the one man I have known whom I would call 'saint'. Yet he put on no halo, he did simply what he felt he was called upon to do — 'Noblesse oblige'.

2. *His Opponents, by Vaughan Nash*

I WELL remember an occasion in 1906 when Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was being taken to task for certain Ministerial arrangements. 'To what category does Sir Horace Plunkett belong?' an irate Nationalist asked him. To which the instant reply was, 'The Plunkett category'. The

House accepted this as final, with a shout of laughter, and for the moment the anomaly of a Unionist retaining office in a Liberal Administration was allowed to continue. It was an embarrassing situation. Plunkett had somehow stayed on where everyone else had gone. In the Presidency of the Irish Department of Agriculture he had created an office personal to himself and his projects, and there was no one to fill it but himself. Why should he be shown the door? If the Government had been free, I suspect they would have left him undisturbed. But the Nationalists were furious about it, and the time came when another occupant had to be found for the Department. He had his full share of the anti-Plunkett bias and lost no time in showing it. Why did so mild and disinterested a man as Plunkett excite such sustained and envenomed wrath? The explanation is that the movement Plunkett stood for lay athwart the stream of Nationalist agitation and threatened the existence of the gombeen man who contributed to the funds. The clash was inevitable and had nothing to do with party politics. Supposing a prophet were to appear in India to-day proclaiming the Plunkett evangel and denouncing the bania and all his works he would be proscribed by Nationalist opinion just as Plunkett was. Gandhi, it is true, has his spinning wheel, the symbol of fidelity to the peasant; but Gandhi is in the forefront of the nationalist movement and the banias form an integral and vital part of it. Whatever Plunkett's views about Home Rule – and he was never a rabid Unionist – he put agricultural organization first. This meant to him the enfranchisement of the

Irish peasant, making a free and responsible man of him through the agency of one sort of co-operative society and another. The creameries and stores, the eggs and fowls and butter were all part of the paraphernalia for turning out men and citizens – and such conceptions fitted ill with the nationalist picture of an oppressed and helpless people awaiting the dawn of political emancipation.

Plunkett was formidable and influential as a leader. His courage and constancy were fed by his unshakable faith in his mission. His persuasiveness attracted followers worth the gaining. The least showy of leaders, he was a master of the art of standard-bearing and would circulate throughout the world accounts of the triumphs of the movement he was building up, and use the press or the millionaire to augment his influence.

The I.A.O.G. goes on, but everyone knows that voluntary co-operation on the agricultural side has failed to fill the bill. The great marketing unit, with its regulations and officials and compulsion in the background is in the offing and the new Agricultural Organiser is the Government itself.

3. *From His Own Letters*

The following are extracts from a number of letters received from Sir Horace by the Editor of THE COUNTRYMAN:

On His Flying. 'The absurd fictions in the Press about my flying very nearly made me give up the little flying I am doing. I tried to keep my performances secret. Everybody assumes that one is advertising oneself. It was an accident that I ever

flew at all. I wanted to study the sprawl of the cities and suburbs over the vanishing countryside, now proceeding so rapidly that maps, books and official documents are out of date. I came to the conclusion that I must see the thing from the air. Close to where I have come to end my days lies the Brooklands track. It encircles an aerodrome wherein there is a school of flying. Its director undertook to show me what I wanted to see. In the first flight I became so deeply interested in aviation that I determined to try to understand what flying really was. I asked the director if his school could teach a man of seventy-five. He said he didn't know but could soon find out. I took lessons from him and other instructors. I shall never be an expert airman – I cannot get a certificate because I am not "medically fit" – but I have learned enough to make my own forecast of the future of England in the air. I am convinced that it depends on education in airmanship calculated to develop the qualities which so long made Britannia the undisputed ruler of the waves. That is the teaching of the strangest experience of my life.'

On Praise and Abuse. 'When I was over-praised, I used to put the bouquets mentally beside the bricks. Now that I am a back number I don't know how I should behave.'

On THE COUNTRYMAN. 'I cannot imagine a more timely service to the rural community. I like its form and I like its brevity; this brevity is essential to-day if you want to be read by the right people. I realize the thought put into the work and the

excellent result. It would be hard to parallel the variety of vital interests and the lucidity of treatment. The literary quality of THE COUNTRYMAN and its moderate price combine to make it important.'

On His Chess. 'I have been a chess player all my life, though I rarely play the game for lack of time. Looking on by playing over the games of good players I find a pleasant relaxation. It is far better than watching the actual play which has become very tedious.'

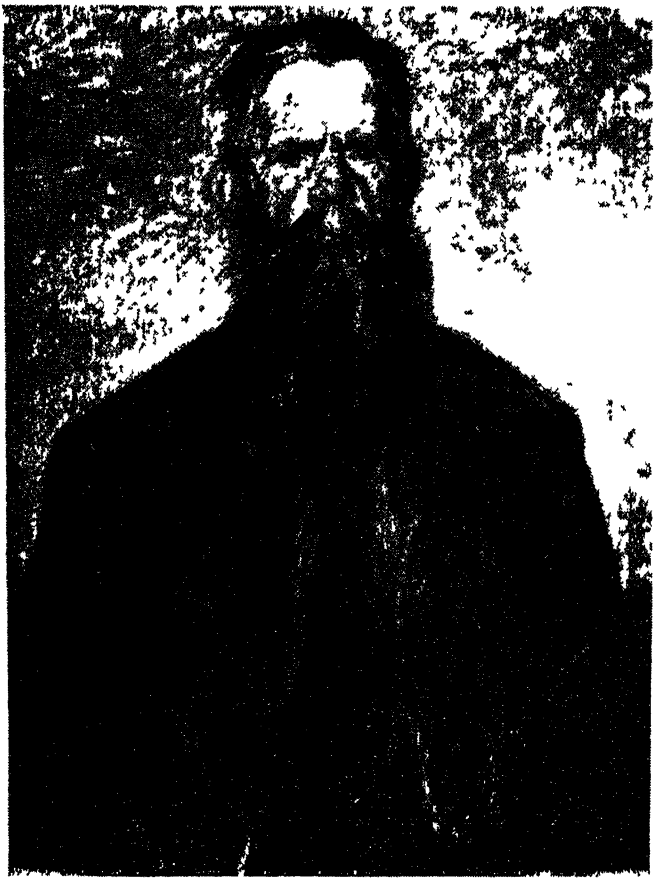
On the Future. 'I believe that we are on the eve of a tremendous effort to save the countryside before it is too late.'

Village Gossip

'THAT be Nod Twist, the village fool; he's wed;
He took a mate half-witted in her mood.
John, Farmer Low, he found them in his shed
Without their lines and not a bite of food.
And being kind, he gave them bread and drink,
And let them warm before the kitchen flame,
And tried to make the simple creatures think
Of what they'd done and how they'd lived in shame.

So they were wed and worked for Farmer Low;
One in the fields, the other at the spool.
The girl be bearing child, but she don't know
That with such forebears it must be a fool;
And Farmer's wife be barren, so they say:
The Lord do move in a mysterious way!'

C. J. M. Turner



2. *ELI, THE THATCHER*

One of Sir William Rothenstein's delightful portraits which are reproduced in photogravure in his book. We have been kindly lent a photograph

Gipsy Prayer

DEAR little god, if thou wilt hear my prayer, I will presently give thee five fine brown-limbed sons, when thou hast permitted me to marry Rhoda Ripley, of the soft, pale skin, and beautiful sullen eyes. Make humble as the little stones on the pond's edge, that fierce, proud heart, and grant, when the new moon is in the sky, thin, golden, and curved like one of her own earrings, she will promise to be mine.

Sweet little god, if thou lettest old Bertha the one-eyed, discard soon her great load of ninety years, and leave to me, as she has promised, her blue caravan with the red wheels, and beer-coloured door, I will plant oak and beech nuts on the top of every bare, windy hill, which, growing to tall trees will one day give shelter to some traveller.

Silent little god, dim the light of thy children, the stars, that I may take from mine enemy, the surly Gentile John of the Calder Valley, the litter of his fine dog, Bess, when he has her away and over the hills with him, nipping the shins of my brethren, in the wine-red evening.

Mighty little god, so that I shall have money to buy fine wedding goods, make the dirty Russian, Vladimir, buy my little horses, Joe and Amoretta, at Tostington Fair on Friday, and cause to remain hidden from his red, dripping eyes, the sores of Amoretta, and the skin disease of Joe.

Beautiful little god, this is my last request. Make me love always the beautiful things in the world, and keep me from growing fat and filthy like old Sannie. Give me understanding of the wind's voice, and the conversation of the rocks among which I sit, and I beseech thee to make manifest one day the singing thing in my heart, which was born the day I stood on Prester Fells, in the sunshine, saw the wide, happy world spread before me, and heard the faint bells chiming in the Jesuit place in the valley.

For the granting of these things, lovely little god with the mild shining eyes, and patient heart, I will presently give thee five fine brown-limbed sons, when thou hast permitted me to marry my darling Rhoda Ripley.—*E.M.*

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KAFFIR HUT: ART AND THE ARTIST



She says the figures represent trees like the euphorbia near, but the resemblance of the drawings to the human frame suggests that they are totems

Her Way of Life

by E. Roberts Ellis

'THIS sup o' tea u'll help me along t' road nicely', she said, as she set the mug on the table with a clatter, 'but tea's nowt by itself, it needs summat to help it down.' She took another large bite of the ham and bread and munched it heartily and noisily. I looked at my visitor as she sat on a kitchen chair by the open door. There was nothing pleasing about her. A rough, coarsened old woman, wearing cast-off clothes. Her overcoat, with two big patch pockets, must have been made for an outsize man. It was held in position by two large safety pins and an old leather belt, and reached to her ankles. Her grey hair straggled from under an old hat, her face was lined, her hands dirty and knobbly. She finished the meal, then rubbed the back of her hand across her mouth and nose, took a broken clay pipe from her pocket and began to fill it with bits of twist.

'Happen you'll spare me a match, missis.' I passed the match box to her, and after lighting the pipe, she slipped the matches into her pocket, and puffed away. 'Aye, I'm a believer in fruit miself,' she continued. 'I allus think an orange is a good finish to a meal, don't you missis? Of course if you haven't one, you can't give one.' On the dresser there was a dish of fruit which I knew she had seen. I gave the largest Jaffa to her. It was slipped into the same pocket as the matches.

'Well, I mun get to Clithon Union toneet, and

it's a fairish stretch.' She took the pipe from her mouth and wrapped it in an old red handkerchief. 'Why', I said, 'it's twenty-two miles to Clithon.' She stood up and guffawed. 'Nay, don't worry, missis, I shall get there reet enough. There'll be a lot o' lorries and vans on t' main road and they gen'lly take pity on an owd un.' 'Yes', I said, 'but supposing you can't get a lift?' She made a grimace, then put her foot up on the chair to tighten her bootlace. 'I shall tramp as far as Gaston, to where t' road chaps are working. There's a watchman there an' he'll hev a hut an' a fire, so I shall spend t' night wi him. Them chaps are allus glad of a bit o' company. Then there's sure to be plenty o' motors passing in t' morning.'

I prepared to bid her farewell. She was not to be hurried. 'Eh, by gum! these socks are about done for.' She examined her legs carefully. 'Happen yer owd man has a pair o' socks he's not wearing, missis? They'll hev to be woollen for tramping in this sort o' weather.' I found a pair of man's woollen socks. She took them and thrust her hand inside one of them. 'Um, they's darned a lot, but they'll manage till I get another pair somewhere. My job's rough on socks; one pair is nowt.' However she pushed them into her pocket alongside the orange and the matches.

'Surely', I said, 'at your age, you would prefer to settle down and rest, rather than tramp the country in all weathers. You don't even know where the next meal is coming from.' She looked at me with scorn, then sat down. 'No, missis, I wouldn't. Not after forty-two years on t' road. I should choke

if I was to live in a poky little house, an' as for t' Union — Ugh! Never! Fancy me stopping wi a lot o' cackling owd women, dressed in a print frock, an' a little shawl on mi head, scrubbing tables an' peeling taters.' She rubbed her mouth vigorously with her hand, then spat. 'No, I've managed so long an' if mi rheumatics don't beat me, I'll hev mi freedom to th' end.'

Again she stood up. 'I'm nobbut going to Clithon Union to meet a pal ut's bin in hospital. He'll wait for me till he sees me. Him an' me u'll be going south together. It's a bit warmer, an' farmers are a bit softer down there, but we shall come back in summer.'

I went to the door to watch her down the path. Halfway she stopped and turned, 'Eh, I'd nearly forgotten, will yer give me a screw o' tea an' sugar, then yon night-watchman 'ull make a sup o' tea in mi billy can?' Once more satisfied she said 'Good day,' and again ambled down the path. Near the gate, a sack of potatoes had been emptied on the grass to dry. With an astonishing liveliness she stooped and quickly filled her empty pocket with potatoes. Then, without a turn of the head or a backward glance, she passed outside the gate and trudged down the inviting road.



THE EDITOR will be very much obliged if readers who have not already filled up and sent to him the form enclosed at page 224 of the last issue of THE COUNTRYMAN will kindly do so.

Is it Better and Cheaper to Live in the Country?

I. Housewife Subscribers' Facts about Housekeeping in a Village

OUR contributors to this series (see THE COUNTRYMAN for October, 1929 and January, 1930), have been women in command of a fair income. Several have both town and country houses, some have more country houses than one. How about the desirability of life in the country for housewives of modest means? is the problem to which our present batch of readers address themselves.

As two of our readers have thought it would be a pleasant thing to go to the country as a schoolmaster or a schoolmistress, here is a note from a schoolmistress telling us what her house is like. 'It is inconvenience itself. Stone passages, a pump for water supply, the coal and the clothes boiler in the same outhouse, no bathroom, no hot water supply; in fact, no modern advantage.' Against the sigh of one of our correspondents for 'the thrill of the singing in the Albert Hall when it is full', this schoolmistress sets 'a sunrise in our beloved Cotswolds, a sunset over our sleepy Severn, the ethereal beauty of a moonlit landscape or the burnished autumn glory of a hedgerow on a September afternoon.'

A Norfolk reader's trouble is being 'twenty miles from a library and finding oneself with no matches, bad butter and smashed lamp glasses five miles from a shop'.

An author of books of distinction, writing from another county, says: 'I cannot agree with the correspondent who considers that two people can live in the country with ease on

£300. If they are young and strong – yes, but then they should be making a living somewhere else. If they are over sixty, No! It will be increasingly difficult to wait on themselves. The damsel will decline the pieces of work she doesn't like; the elderly will find themselves, for example, fetching in coals and chopping wood, and possibly cleaning windows. All these things, and cleaning flues, sifting cinders and making pastry and (or) bread, have been assigned to me by my 'helps' who found them beyond their powers. But in the oncoming years I shall not be able always to take over the tasks which they disdain. It would be so much pleasure to do all one's own work, but . . . Oh well, life is mostly an obstacle race, a starting point (especially for a woman) and then –'

Let us now give the wisdom of a farmer's wife. 'I should hesitate to recommend anyone to adopt country life in preference to town life,' she says, 'it is so much a matter of temperament. My London friends never cease to wonder how I can live in the middle of a field! And their shops! – they know nothing of the simple delights of producing everything possible – home-baked bread from one's own flour, butter, Devonshire cream, plump young chickens, eggs, honey, fruit and vegetables, and home-fed and home-cured hams and bacon. And is there anything in towns to compare with the sight of newly-turned earth in spring, the fresh young green of the springing wheat, the gorgeous expanse of ripening corn, the beech trees in all the glory of their autumn dress, the smell of new mown hay, or of damp earth after rain? Then the winter evenings, rest after toil, linking up with the world by radio (and listening to the Editor's views!) – give me the country every time.'

'Life in the country is more economical than life in town,' a cottage reader, an early Girtonian, admits, 'but life is not easy in a remote village, except for those accustomed to it in early life.' 'Country life,' in her opinion, should be undertaken by 'young, healthy, hopeful people. Those born and

bred in towns must be ready to give up preconceived ideas and to live humbly, watching those who know the life and preparing gradually to be absorbed into the community. The great thing is not to be in a hurry, and, above all, to learn first and not to try to teach those who are already in possession. After ten years I am thinking of leaving my charming little cottage in order to get nearer the centre of civilization, as I am over sixty and my faithful friend is over seventy. I am glad of the experience I have had, I am filled with respect for the clever cheerful way in which my neighbours tackle their difficult life, and I am grateful for their friendship and their constant kindness.'

A peeress, who has had to consider her expenditure, thinks that 'on the whole one can live more economically in the country than in town. Rents and rates are cheaper, and if there is a man about the place (one of the family) who does gardening, vegetables and fruit are cheaper. If a gardener has to be paid, they are not cheaper. Clothes are dearer, but wear longer, and the changes of fashion are less noticed. Meat and fish are dearer. Domestic help is cheaper. Probably one spends less on amusement, though when indulged in (concerts, plays, etc.) the particular 'outing' costs much more than in town – as a rule.'

'If by economy you mean pounds, shillings and pence (and especially shillings),' writes a primary schoolmistress in the Midlands, 'country life is in no respect more economical than town life. Your town friend thrusts at you two facts – always the same two facts: '8*d.* a lb. I pay for runner beans, and 5*d.* and 6*d.* for broccoli. You can go and pick your beans and cut your broccoli for nothing.' As if country garden produce falls as manna from the skies! So very many nameless unremembered acts of cartage, of urgent messages, of calls for this and that fund, cost you money. Economy of £.*s.d.* in the country? No!' This reader goes on: 'If you are fired with zeal, and want to come and brighten us up, please understand that our ways are not your ways, neither are

our thoughts your thoughts. That is all. But if you are a countrywoman born, and need the solace of the open sky and the wind and the wide views and all the many sounds of nature, if your heart has been broken in two by the casualty stations of the Somme battlefields, if you want to feel the touch of a vanished hand, or to learn to discern the way of the Spirit, there are, for your healing, pansies and periwinkles and honeysuckle and clovers, and buttercups and daisies and lime trees and red cloves and roses and lavender and bergamot and sweet cicely, and puppies and lambs and little pink pigs, and wagtails and gold finches and night-scented stocks.'

A North country reader has something new to say on the servant problem. It is so bad in her area, she says, that 'one clergyman in the neighbourhood had to resign his seat on the District Council because he had to help to wash dishes and do other housework.' 'After struggling with middle-aged women for several years', she goes on, 'I at last determined to try a man. An advertisement in a local paper brought seven replies. Two, who mentioned wages, asked ten shillings a week, two others twelve shillings, one of them twenty-five shillings. I engaged a middle-aged man. He keeps the kitchens, grates, etc., in better order than the incompetent women and tidies the rooms nicely. He prepares vegetables and can be trusted to put them on at the right time and keep the saucepans boiling; in fact he does all the work a general servant would do except the washing. As most men seem especially fond of polishing bright articles, the brasses are always in good condition. I do not wish to imply that he is as good as a really experienced woman servant, but so much better than those I can afford or who will put up with country life, that, when he leaves me, I shall try another man. A man is physically strong, can shake rugs vigorously, move furniture about with ease, is not afraid of being left in the house alone, and does not insist upon a bus passing the door. He can look after himself and one's moral responsibility is not so great as for a maidservant.

II. Has Countryman or Londoner the Advantage?

Morning and night I bring
Clear water from the spring,
And through the lyric noon
I hear the larks in tune,
And when the shadows fall
There's providence for all.

My path of paven grey
Is thoroughfare all day –
For fellowship, till time
Bids us with candles climb
The little whitewashed stair
Above my lavender.

JOHN DRINKWATER

Morning and night I found
White snow upon the ground.
And on the tragic well
Grey ice had cast her spell,
A dearth of wood and coal
Lay heavy on my soul.

My path of cinders black
Had an abundant lack
Of visitors, till time
Bade us with boxes climb
The train that hurries on
To warm old Paddington.

MAX BEERBOHM

From Sir William Rothenstein's 'Men and Memories'

MANY aspects of this question were discussed in THE COUNTRYMAN of April, 1928, in a series of letters from, among others, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, Mr. Arnold Bennett, Mr. G. K. Chesterton, Mr. Noel Coward, Mr. John Drinkwater, Dr. Havelock Ellis, Mr. St. John Ervine, Mr. John Galsworthy, Mr. Aldous Huxley, Sir W. Arbuthnot Lane, Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr. E. V. Lucas Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. John Masefield, Mr. A. A. Milne, Mr. George Moore, Mr. R. H. Mottram, Mr. H. W. Nevinson, Mr T. F. Powys, Mr. Sidney Webb (as he then was), Mr. Humbert Wolfe and Mrs. Virginia Woolf. Here are other points of view.

I. A Schoolboy Speaks his Mind

HAVING been born in the country and having lived in it all my life, I find that country life is exceedingly dull. The life is very quiet, hardly anything of interest

ever happens and this has a very bad effect upon the minds of the people living in the country. Their minds become very narrow, they know little, if anything, of the life outside their own village, and in time they become so that they do not wish to know anything else, and, if told anything of which they have the faintest doubt, without stopping to think, will straightway declare it a lie, and nothing will turn them from it. The people who really notice how very dull the life is are those who come down from the towns and busy cities, together with the young people who live in the country, that is if they have any life in them at all. It is not so much in the daytime that they notice it, for then they have their work to do. It is in the evening when the day's work is done. On walking through a village in summer, all one sees is a few children playing on the village green, here and there a man, and a group of youths who sit down under some shady tree and pass remarks about the passers-by. This is in summer ; in winter there is not so much life as this. Another effect of the life being so uninteresting is that it leads people into doing things which, under different circumstances, they would never think of doing. So we find in villages and small country towns young men who spend their time and money drinking and gambling. They think nothing of their parents at home, so long as they can get their food from them ; they do not even care if they are not properly clothed as long as they can obtain plenty of beer. This, indeed, is one of the worst effects of the dull, uninteresting life. Such people as W. H. Hudson and Wordsworth found the country very interesting because they were lovers of nature ; they would never have been happy in a town. These, however, were exceptions, and I firmly believe that the majority of people prefer town life to country life, simply because it is so much more lively and interesting. [The other month a lad in a village school, asked why he and his schoolfellows were being educated, replied, 'To help us to keep off the land, sir' – *Editor*]

2 *A City Typist on the Dullness of London*

WHEN I was spending my holidays in the lovely Weald of Kent I learned to my dismay that many young men and women were migrating to London because they found things 'so dull down here'. As I believe that there is no duller place on earth than London for the working man or woman, may I give an outline of the kind of life I lead? I am a shorthand-typist earning £2 10*s.* a week. I pay 30*s.* for board and lodging, my fares cost 6*s.*, lunches 5*s.* and insurance, 1*s.* 2*d.*, which leaves 7*s.* 10*d.* out of which must come my clothes, toilet necessities and holiday fund, leaving not much more than 1*s.* 6*d.* for the gay life of London. This will buy me a seat at the cinema once a week or a dance ticket perhaps once in three, a record which I fancy could be equalled quite easily by my country friends now that there are so many bus services. Free entertainment from one's men friends cannot be counted on since girls in London outnumber men by about six to one, and unless one is superlatively attractive (and London has a devastating effect on the complexion) one's chances of matrimony are small! Should I wish to go to a theatre, which I can afford very seldom, I must stand for perhaps an hour – or two – in a queue in whatever weather there may be. (Of course I do not deny that there are any number of places in London to which admission is free.) My working day is something like this. I get up at 7.30, bolt my breakfast and run down the street to catch a tram, which jolts and clatters to the Tube station. Here I fight my way into a train, thick with cigarette-smoke. It is crowded and for three-quarters of an hour I stand up, one arm hanging to a strap. At Chancery Lane, I struggle out into a crowded lift. Out in the daylight I thread my way through little alleys to a narrow, cavernous street, with tall, dismal buildings on either side. My old-fashioned block of offices is without a lift, so I breathlessly climb flight after flight of ill-lit stairs to the fourth floor. I work in a back room the window of which looks out on

a blank wall. After a hard morning's typing I take lunch in a little tea-shop, where at the marble-topped tables there is very little elbow room. I sit down to a table wet with spilled tea and crowded with dirty plates which the overworked waitress has not had time to clear. The menu I know by heart, it is Friday morning, and I have only sixpence left, so I must be content with roll, butter and cheese and a cup of tea. The waitress takes a long time to serve me. I go back to the office and work hard until six. It is seven before I reach home. By the time I have finished my meal it is too late to go anywhere. I mend my stockings and wash my gloves and at ten I go to bed very tired. As I lay my head on my pillow, I say 'I wish I lived in the country'. Far away someone in the country is saying, 'I wish I lived in London'.

3. *Neighbours*

MY husband always said there was not a man in this place to whom he could really talk – and I feel rather like that about the women – I mean those who consider themselves educated. Among the others I have many friends. To live in the country is not all enjoyment if you enter into the real life. Still I don't think I could live in a town, except London. – *S.H.*

MY experience of the rural woman, extending over 42 years, is that she compares more than favourably with her town and city contemporary in intelligence. As to the men, surely they are brighter than the two men I saw in London buying papers of a 6.30 p.m. edition at 2.30 p.m.'. – *M.S.B.*

4. *A Blind Man in the Country*

THE author of the following poem, who was brought up to farming, lost his sight in the War. For four years he lived in London but felt he must return to the country. He writes to us: 'I could still get pleasure from roaming about, often quite alone. About six months ago, my son, then fourteen, prevailed upon me to buy a tandem bicycle,

and we get a great deal of enjoyment from it. It gives a wonderful sensation of flight on long runs down-hill, and the bird- and tree-sounds are not missed as in a car. In wireless talks I have heard references to living dangerously. If the speakers would allow my son to take them blindfold down Cleeve Hill to Cheltenham or to Winchcombe, they would get all the thrills they require. A boy of fourteen has not yet learnt to be afraid. We have ridden a thousand miles now without mishap. I had not thought cycling could contain such pleasure. Thank you again for THE COUNTRYMAN, which, read to me, gives me great pleasure.'

EYES do not see, yet through that selfsame screen
The soul emerges, clearer vision'd still:
That sight, invincible, reveals more green
The wind-stirred wood upon the distant hill.

Within its vision, freshly lie defined
In green and silver, ribbons o'er the mead;
Whence rising, 'neath the clouds, on April's wind,
The nesting peewits, sobbing, intercede.

Still clear, it sees; while yet the mind recoups
More verdancy in fields which picture sleep:
There is a vine that heavy-laden, droops;
There is a harvest which the soul may reap.

And so, in spring; the ear its medium then;
More sweet the lark's, the thrush's notes are sung;
Wind-song at dawn, which wakes to song, the wren
Singing the willow-trees she dwells among.

Serene, undimmed, God gave that greater light,
And unto it, gave memory's control:
Gave us the blessing of that inner sight,
Opened the windows of the very soul.

A. L.

My Island and Our Life There – 5

by R. M. Lockley

How *the author came into possession of an island off the Welsh coast, full of wild birds and flowers, how he found treasure trove in the wreck of an abandoned schooner; how, after building a house out of the wreck, he brought his bride – this having been told, Mr. Lockley records the experiences of himself, his wife and little daughter.*

IT was of interest to us to read in the Spring COUNTRYMAN about the invasion of the Channel Islands by the large white butterfly. In 1928 we experienced the same thing. Every year favourable winds bring us butterflies and moths, blues, browns, red admirals, peacocks, cinnabars, burnets, all welcome enough; but it was unfortunate that the coming of cabbage butterflies coincided with our experiment in raising kale on a large scale. In order to feed a small stud of chinchilla rabbits, with which we were experimenting at that time, we had enclosed and planted half an acre of the home meadow with greenstuff. There had been at first an idea that we could devote the island to the production of chinchillas entirely by getting rid of the wild rabbits; but on second thoughts it was realized that this plan was unsound, delightful as it would have been. Apart from the difficulty of exterminating the wild rabbits in their labyrinthine burrows, and particularly in their fastnesses in the boulder-strewn cliffs, it was remembered that chinchilla skins are worthless unless taken at the right moment, that is as soon as the winter coat is perfect; therefore it would be necessary to have the animals under daily scrutiny. In any case the slump in prices for skins came just as we acquired the stud, so we decided to use our animals solely as a means of improving the wild stock. By turning down all we bred in two years we succeeded in doing this. Whereas the natives normally average 4 lb. a couple, the hybrids and their descendants

frequently weigh 8 lb. a couple; they all revert to the wild stock in coloration, except for a bluish tinge in the short hair behind the ears, which are larger and blunter than in the wild rabbit – indeed the result is a handsome animal. In this half-acre of rabbit-garden, which we spade-dug ourselves, were planted things beloved of conies – giant dandelion, spinach, beet, milk-thistle, chicory, white turnip, kohl-rabi, clover and vetches, cabbage and thousand-head and marrow-stem kale. Just to see how they would grow we added a few perches of Great Scot potatoes and a strip of black spring oats. What a joy that garden was! It became a paradise for the small birds on migration, and I risked a wetting daily by striding among the great cabbages to see what would fly up, willow-warbler, whitethroat, sedge-warbler, or landrail. We had only turned the sod over late in April, yet the kale, transplanted from the garden between showers in June, shot up nearly waist-high. We reaped a thousandfold, more than twice our requirements. The oats were the finest grown in Pembrokeshire, if I am to believe one of her keenest farmers who saw the narrow strip of breast-high grain. The potatoes were huge, but tasted of the soil. The dandelion patch was a delight and so was the corner where the tall blue-flowering stems of chicory danced in the wind. Then in one long procession the butterflies came out of the east on a warm breeze from the land, a quivering white thread never-ending for two days. We found many washed ashore as well, so that thousands must have perished westwards in the sea and at Grassholm. They revelled in nuptial dance over our greenery while we looked on in alarm. We did make a spasmodic attempt to collect the eggs and a still more energetic attack on the young larvae, but the search was too exhausting. The lighthouse gardens were quite denuded of greens, and it was surprising how our great kale bushes withstood the attack, shooting out branches and new hearts above the old leaves, which were reduced to skeletons. The next stage was the march

of the fattened caterpillars in search of winter quarters. They crept through doorways, up walls, along ceilings, under slates, while the windows were filmed with the fine yellow silk which these full-fed grubs excrete wherever they go. But Nature had already made her countermove, and very few became chrysalids. Instead we saw, with gruesome pleasure, the grubs of the parasitic fly, Micogaster glomeratus, emerging at all points from the epidermis of the unfortunate caterpillars, which shrivelled up at once while the guests wrapped themselves in gold silk for the winter. We had no invasion from overseas the next year, with the result that these tiny flies had matters all their own way, and scarcely a caterpillar survived to the imago stage to lay eggs for the second brood that summer. The third year, as we had by then put all the chinchillas to grass, we did not dig the rabbit-garden, but let Nature have it for her children. The dandelions, chicory, kale, etcetera, ran wildly to seed amid seas of groundsel and flowering grasses, and we were rewarded with the prattle and songs all day long of the linnets, goldfinches, greenfinches and corn-buntings. Even now the chicory and groundsel persist and the linnets come to feed all through the year.

Night Fishing. To test the assertion of local fishermen that the lobsters crawl most during the night and are therefore most easily caught then, we spent one June night out in the boat. Well armed against the rigour of cold and appetite on the sea, with eiderdowns and food, we put in an extra large basket and plenty of seaweed because we hoped we would need it. If, as other fishermen had told us, seventy lobsters were possible in a night's fishing, then our ordinary store-box would soon be overflowing, and experience has taught us the discomfort of lobsters crawling in a boat among feet and ropes. We dipped oars in the molten-smooth sea and ran with the strong north-stream tide to where our pots lay in the eddies at the Head (the finest fishing grounds among these islands). We had chosen a bright moon and a

clear sky, so brilliant that the shearwaters had refused to approach the island and only a few storm-petrels were skimming about us, yet we found it very difficult to pick out our corks: the light played tricks with the swirling froth of the backwater so that slices of white foam in shadow were as black as buoys. Once we rowed up to a seal which, lying with eyes and nostrils at water level, simulated a buoy to perfection. Alarm having succeeded curiosity, he dived with a velocity that sent a wash violently rocking the boat. We did not find all our pots, but we hauled three strings, ten to each. When the first pot came up the moonlight revealed the glistening carapace of first one, then another, and then a third lobster, behind the prison bars of willow. As the next pot came up the light shone on the spines and warts of a crayfish. The next pot contained only a crab, the fourth pot two huge crabs, the fifth, another crab. But the sixth was empty and thereafter we had almost nothing. One string was quite empty, the bait all gone, the work of congers, which will slip from pot to pot and devour everything. So more than two hours' overtime and much preparation beforehand had secured five lobsters at 1*s.* per lb., value 9*s.*; one crayfish at 8*d.*, 2*s.*; twelve crabs at 4*d.*, about 8*s.* 4*d.* On the whole not much better than day-fishing was our conclusion. We could not row back at once, the stream was still going north. We moored to one of our corks, and huddled out of the cold into our eiderdowns. We must have slept for at least two hours because the sun was on the horizon when we woke, and there was a strange murmur in our ears. The current had long ago changed, and, sweeping in our direction, had gently withdrawn the cork over the side of the boat and set us free to drift on the smooth sea several miles from home.

Another Island. We were close to a sister island the steep cliffs of which were festooned with myriads of sea-fowl—guillemots, razorbills, kittiwakes—whose clamour had roused us. Having swept us one way, the current was now hurrying

us the other and we were passing the sea-bird colonies at a rate that made the whole scene seem a moving panorama. We pulled into a tiny fiord possessed by thousands of kittiwakes whose cries made conversation difficult. From out of a deep cavern there swept a pair of red-billed, red-legged choughs. Above, a colony of cormorants were schooling in flying the young ones who craned their snakish necks down at us in wonder. We have since explored this island, and know it now as a place of superb cliffs and caves; but, as poor islanders, our greatest discovery was a hidden beach at the back of the fiord and under a threatening brow of rock, where we found the greatest mass of driftwood it has ever been our good fortune to behold. Rank upon rank, spars, beams, planks, hatches, stumps of masts, even whole masts, the whole beach was covered with timber. You might have thought that here the sea broke up privately all the old wooden ships that had yielded up their lives to her. No wind could blow the timber out to sea because the cliffs screened off all but the prevailing sou'westers which, with the currents to help, had achieved this accumulation of centuries. Of course we shall never do more than nibble at this store, which we regard as the timely successor to our coal supply.

Here, from the log-book, are the records of four days:

Wednesday. Several turtle-doves here. How welcome are they, yet how much out of place these gentle tree-dwelling doves seem on this wind-swept island. More extraordinary still is this midsummer migration; it seems scarcely possible that the birds will find congenial quarters in time to rear young this year. Probably most of them are immature, wandering away their first year in an almost sexless peregrination . . . Sheared three ewes before packing the fish and setting out for Milford market; over fifty lobsters and about two hundredweight of crabs, which fetched £6 11s.; much less than I expected. There had been a fresh north breeze when we started, but there was no helpful wind to return, so we motored the twelve miles home over an oily

sea, trailing a pollack line: result, one green, one black specimen.

Thursday. Exceptionally low tide to-day and as it was calm we took full advantage of the opportunity to lay the pots in favourite lobster-holes among the weeds along the shore. The bait being fresh we hauled three times and got 17 lobsters, 2 crayfish, and about 40 crabs, a fair start for the week.

Friday. Made an end of the shearing by doing the remainder, some twenty-one ewes, in six solid hours at the machine. O blessed invention! To think that I laboured through the flock last year with the hand-clippers! In the evening we went the usual round of the wild-birds' nests, to see which eggs had hatched and to reckon how long they had taken. The shearwater beats all records for British birds with 50 days of incubation, the puffin and the storm-petrel each 40, while the different gulls vary between 26 and 27.

Saturday. Took some friends and a string of pots to Grassholm, but, although we hauled three times, all we got were many starfish, a small octopus and an unmarketable crab (minus one claw). We were lucky, however, on coming back, to catch a pollack weighing seven pounds, which I had never thought possible except in dreams. I thought at first I had hooked the rock, so viciously was the twine jerked. Coming through the Broad Sound at sunset we ran into the dense hosts of the shearwaters, assembling preparatory to landing at midnight. There is nothing to equal the experience of sailing through this magic living carpet, now uniform black and now gleaming white as the sun catches with its last rays ten thousand breasts simultaneously tilted to the light.

Sunday. When we went ashore for mail and stores my monster pollack furnished a meal for a farmer, his wife, and six full-grown dependants.

(To be continued)

What the Agricultural Economists Say

QUARTERLY, if need be, a respected agricultural economist will review in THE COUNTRYMAN, *with a free hand, in a non-Party spirit, for the benefit of busy people, books on agricultural economics which so many of us ought to read and so few of us find time to tackle.*

NOT one country in the world has escaped agricultural depression. The onset has varied in the different countries, and the severity of the crisis has varied widely between different countries, and between branches of agriculture in particular countries, but the causes of depression in any country cannot be found within that country, and all efforts to insulate any country from world causes have proved unavailing. The useful survey of the problem is the Report of the Economic Committee of the League of Nations.* The reports of the experts from practically every country in the world describe the situation in each country up to 1930, and these can be supplemented for later developments by the report issued by the International Institute of Agriculture.† The experts differ, as experts will, and the Economic Committee, in summing up the situation, is chary of coming to definite conclusions as to causes, and not very confident as to remedies. For those who like to have cut and dried conclusions presented to them, the result may be disappointing, but those who are concerned to discover the facts will find more than enough on which to try their teeth.

'The crisis brings about a disproportion', says the Committee, 'between the prices of commodities and services for which the farmer has to pay and the prices of the products which he has been able to sell.' This is nothing new for agriculture. Sir Josiah Stamp has put it on record that

* *The Agricultural Crisis* (League of Nations, Vol. I, pp. 319, 7*s*. 6*d*.; Vol. II, pp. 113, 3*s*. 3*d*.)

† *The Agricultural Situation* 1930-31 (International Institute of Agriculture, 25 lire)

'agriculture for the past hundred years has had to be satisfied with a perceptibly lower rate of return than the general rate' and 'the world has been fed at less than cost price, assuming that in cost we include a standard and equated remuneration for service.' What is of importance is that the scale has dipped heavily against agriculture. When the economic blizzard began to blow, agriculture found itself less shielded than industry and commerce. How far that was due to causes within the agricultural industry itself and how far it was due to political and financial causes of a general character is where the experts disagree. There is general agreement that the dislocations caused by the War, and the War settlements, are at the root of the trouble. They stimulated production in certain countries and reduced demand in others and led to monetary inflation followed by deflation. New national boundaries were erected and along these ever higher tariff walls were erected, while quite as important as the barriers to trade are the barriers to movement of population. All these dislocations told heavily on agriculture.

Within the industry itself something approaching a revolution has been taking place. The continually accelerated drive during the last generation to increase agricultural production has borne fruit in the discovery of new varieties, new sources of fertilisers and new methods of production. The biologist has followed the chemist and has been followed in turn by the engineer. Wheat, which started the price collapse, shows the effect of these changes in the most spectacular form, and when we remember that cereals account for probably 50 per cent of the agricultural output, the effect of technological changes is bound to be far-reaching. When we are considering subsidiary wheat-growing in this country, the changes in world production of wheat are worthy of serious consideration, and the report of the Imperial Economic Committee provides a wealth of material on this question.* Nor is the problem rendered any

* *The Wheat Situation*, 1931 (H.M.S.O., pp. 121, 6*d*.)

easier of solution by the social changes, which seem to indicate that cereals will play a less important part in the dietary of the people of western nations, and that fruit, vegetables and dairy products will become more important. The effect of smaller families on the demand for certain classes of meat is also adding to the problem of adjustment to social changes.

The fact that stands out most clearly from the survey of the agricultural depression is that not one of the countries has been able to protect its agriculture by national effort. There is not a device of tariffs, subsidies, credits, or market control which has ever been suggested that has not been tried somewhere, and the conclusion reached by the Economic Committee of the League of Nations is that all these devices have merely served to aggravate the depression for everybody. It is something to have the situation surveyed by an international authority, and better to have efforts at international action, as we have had in sugar and wheat at the various conferences held last year; but such developments take time. The International Agricultural Institute is our oldest international organization and its publications are invaluable,* but beyond the collection of information it has not been able to secure international action.

When we turn from the international aspect of the depression to find how farming is withstanding the strain at home, we have a very opportune inquiry made by the Agricultural Economics Research Institute at Oxford.† This is the report of an inquiry sent to land surveyors and resident agents as to the number of farms changing hands and the farms for which applications for reduction of rent had been received. What the inquiry shows is that there is severe depression on the cereal farms of the Eastern counties and on the barley and sheep farms on chalk land, that stock-farming is much more

* *International Year Book of Agricultural Statistics* (Rome, pp. 828, 90 liras)

† *The Agricultural Depression of* 1931, by M. Messer (Clarendon Press, pp. 32, 1*s.*)

satisfactory and that dairy-farming cannot be classed as depressed. But how difficult it is to make generalizations even in one branch of farming may be realized from another study from the same Institute.* We are accustomed to speak of dairy-farming as if it were a question of the price fixed by collective bargaining, whereas Mr. Prewett shows that the national agreement does not work. Unless there is some marketing reorganization soon, the milk farmers will find themselves in the trough along with arable farmers. A more comprehensive survey comes from Dr. Ruston† of Leeds. But it may be as well to remember that what is true of the West Riding may not be true of Westmorland.

As a corrective to the pessimism engendered by too much consideration of the ills of agriculture, I suggest bearing in mind that the last great European war, more than a hundred years ago, left just such an aftermath and kept our forefathers busy experimenting with remedies. Mr. Leonard P. Adams‡ has given us an admirable study which almost proves that history does sometimes repeat itself. Let us hope, however, that we shall recover earlier than our forefathers did. If we are to believe Mr. Montague Fordham,§ it needn't take us long. My difficulty is that I have never known any scheme which was so simple that it didn't require explanation or so abstruse that it could not be explained. Whether Mr. Fordham's scheme is simple or abstruse I have not been able to discover because I have failed to find the explanation. But it is an entertaining book because Mr. Fordham has wit and style. – *Flail*

* *Problems of Milk Distribution*, by F. J. Prewett (Clarendon Press, pp. 32, 1*s*.)

† *The Agricultural Depression and Methods by which it is being met* (Journal of Farmers' Club, March 1932, London, pp. 58, 2*s*. 6*d*.)

‡ *Agricultural Depression and Farm Relief in England*, 1813-1852 (King, pp. 178, 7*s*. 6*d*.)

§ *Britain's Trade and Agriculture*, by Montague Fordham (Allen and Unwin, pp. 216, 7*s* 6d.)

An 18th Century Parson Farmer

The Diary of Benjamin Rogers – 9

September the 8th, 1741, being Tuesday. A Great Storm of Wind and Thunder, the Lightning and Rain did a great deal of damage to Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire and Norfolk. Trees, Houses, and Barns were blown down in several cases. At St. Neots they thot Eaton was on Fire, and at Eaton they thot St. Neots was on Fire. St. Ives, Hemingford, Bliatsham Steeples were blown down. We had but a Skirt of it here.

June the 24th, 1743. Tom Morris began to Work my Wife's Gravestone. He is to lay it and do everything but carry it to the Church for 15*s*.

April the 16th, 1747. My dear friend Mr. Flaval died of a Fever on his Nerves.

September the 16th. Was the Election for Common Council Men. The Duke of Bedford was violently bent to bring the Corporation under his power, to which purpose a Creature of his was to be elect'd Mayor. But that not being to be done without Great Violence He dropt it, not being able to nominate a person for candidate. He bestir'd himself mightily, and when he could not corrupt 3 of the Aldermen, viz. Mr. Walter, Mr. Russell, and Mr. Hornbuckle, to Whom He had made great Offers, He muster'd all his Forces, which appeared after a Tedious Pole. We were kept in the Hall from about 11 a Clock to 6 in the Evening but all was pretty quiet. They made several Burgesses and Freemen the week before to secure themselves against the Duke, who, they knew was like to bribe high having the Election so much at Heart.

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From Rural Scotland and Rural Wales

by the Duke of Montrose, Joseph Duncan, Secretary of the Scottish Farm Servants' Union, and Others

THE Duke of Montrose who as president and leader of the Scottish Trade Mission is in Canada, and has made speeches in four cities in four days, posts his quarterly notes from the other side. We have communications from other Scottish readers and also some account of happenings in Wales. In a later issue we shall have a letter from Ireland

OUR Scottish Trade Mission to Canada, on board the 'Letitia' of the Anchor-Donaldson Line, has been a wonderful success. We had 87 stalls, in which were shown wares representing 148 different lines of trade. We even had a kennel of Scottish terriers. We were received with open arms everywhere; and 35,000 people boarded our ship in the five afternoons she was open. We did not intend to sell over the counter; our exhibits were merely to support our business interviews, and to show our friends what we produce in Scotland; nevertheless we left behind us most of our stalls en bloc. The dogs were claimed by new owners in the first hour, and the whole of the fishing tackle went next. We found that there are 1,240,000 Scots families settled in Canada. In the maritime provinces they are more Scottish than we are at home: Gaelic is spoken fluently, the butcher is still called 'flesher' over his shop door, and the 'wee tinkling bell' announces the visitor as it used to do in days gone by in every clachan in the homeland. The Highland regiments in Montreal and Toronto are famous corps. They have marvellous pipe bands. The pipe-major of the Toronto Highlanders is a typical old Scots warrior. He is 70 years of age; and piped the Gordons into action at Dargai and Chitral, as well as in South Africa, and in the Great War. As he goes round the dinner table piping 'The Road to the Isles' he has all the swagger of the 'Cock of the North'. We found the Canadians anxious to do business with us

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but they complained of lack of 'personal contact'. They want to buy from our producers as direct as possible and not through impersonal agent firms. We found openings for business in wools of various sorts; but just because of this lack of 'personal contact', Canadians buy much of their requirements through the United States, although undoubtedly some of it comes from Bradford. If they bought direct from Scotland they would save about 15 per cent tariff. The lesson of this trade mission is undoubtedly 'personal contact'. We were told also that at the annual Toronto exhibition, the biggest thing of its kind in the world, the United Kingdom takes only 10 per cent of the space which it usually takes in foreign exhibitions such as those at Buenos Aires and Leipzig. Yet the Canadians are our best customers in trade per head of population. They passed 2,000,000 people through their turnstiles at this Toronto Exhibition. They suggested that we should have a permanent pavilion there, and why not? Our Scottish Highland home crafts and industries were cleared out at our stall on board the 'Letitia'; and there seems little doubt that, if properly organized, we could do a tremendous trade, and bring much welcome work and money to numerous cottages in our glens in Scotland – *Montrose*

WHY the People Go. I spent last week-end in a corner where the small farm has persisted almost undisturbed as in no other part of Scotland, and successfully on the whole. Thrift, hard work, and large families were the basis of permanency, and a poor soil protected the small holdings from being engrossed into larger farms. Something, too, must be credited to the fact that the railway did not reach that country. Now that the buses run the roads and traders send canvassers from the cities of the south, the families are decreasing in size – and their outlets to the tea and rubber plantations and the Dominions are closed. This week-end I have been ranging the glens where sheep farms have held



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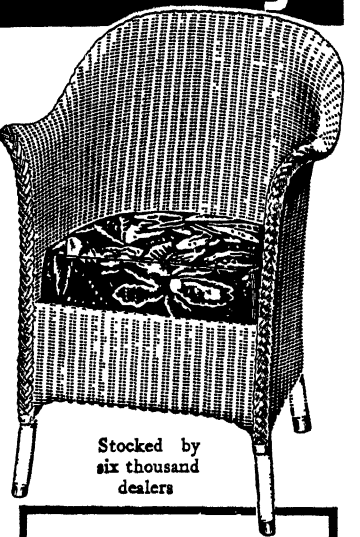
out on the banks of salmon rivers and on the edges of grouse moors. I am told that stretches of salmon rivers are going cheap and that grouse moors are a drug on the market, while the crop of lambs is a record, which makes sheep farmers think dolefully of throw-away prices. The hand of change is heavy on the Highlands because whatever one may think about the social economy of laying away the country to sporting grounds, a good case can be made out for more employment being found by sporting tenants than by sheep farmers. The Scottish National Development Council is undertaking a complete survey of Scottish agriculture and is to make a serious effort to find out the possibilities of rural industries. That is a more hopeful proceeding than merely to bemoan rural depopulation. An itch to keep more people, and usually people other than oneself, on the land will get us no further than the political policies of the last generation. I doubt if we can keep the people we have on the land unless they find some way of making it worth while to remain. And anyhow it is difficult to keep as many if people will insist on living longer and leaving fewer openings for the young folk who could rear families. Nobody has suggested that grandfather relinquish his hold, although we might find it easier to adapt ourselves to the changes forced upon us if he would. – *J.F.D.*

BETTY Bonnets. Everybody in the part of Aberdeenshire in which she lived called her 'Betty Bonnets'. She had a child and that was probably the means of urging her to find a home of her own. Betty earned her living on the farm fields and in the peat moss. She chose for her dwelling-place, a site (by permission of the proprietor) on a lone hillside, covered with heather, gorse and broom. She herself dug out the foundation and bore on her back, in creel or sack, the stone required. The squared blocks for the corners, lintels, etc., she carried from a quarry about a mile distant. To build the house she hired a mason, herself acting as labourer.

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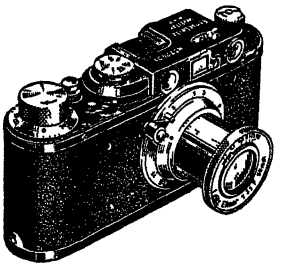
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It was a little, one-storeyed dwelling, roofed with rough timber, heathery divots, and straw thatch, and divided into two small rooms, with a box-bed as the division between 'but and ben'. The walls were roughly plastered with clay, the floor was of hard-beaten clay, and there was no ceiling. When Betty was not working out of doors, she was knitting or sewing. She contrived all her own clothing, and made for others besides. By and by she placed an order with a canvasser for a treadle sewing machine. It was forwarded to a house on the highway at a point over a mile from her cot, to be called for. When Betty arrived she asked, 'Is there a bit parcellie here for me?' 'Parcellie!' exclaimed the woman of the house; 'there's a big box cam' wi' the 'bus that neither you nor I will be able to lift!' 'G'awa' wi' ye! It's but a sewin' machine, and nae sae heavy as a' that.' With the box slung over her shoulders as a fishwife carries her creel, Betty set off for home. But she had more than once to rest by the way, with her back against a dyke. When nearly home, someone passed, saying, 'That's a gey birn ye hae, Betty.' 'Ay, it is raither mair than I thocht, or else I'm turnin' waur o' the wear. I canna understand it! I'm sure I've carried a heavier birn mony a time, on-nott a rist (without a rest).'—*J.W.*

RECALCITRANT Aberdeen. The granite city simply will not live down to its reputation. The other month the Editor of THE COUNTRYMAN, speaking as president of the National Folk Cookery Association, and it may be with an eye to giving the reporters a paragraph, expressed the opinion that it was possible to get more good food for your money in Aberdeen than anywhere in Great Britain. And now here is a resident, or rather an ex-resident, bequeathing a useful sum the interest of which is to be used by the Council 'for assisting to feed the wild birds in or about the city in winter'. The result of an advertising campaign, too, is interesting. The Scottish Farmers' Union and the Scottish

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Chamber of Agriculture co-operated to spend £1000 upon advertising milk. The result, within the limits of the city alone, was that consumption through the regular pool-controlled channels went up by three hundred gallons daily. Now there was a difference of eightpence a gallon between the price the farmers received for milk sold to be drunk and surplus milk sold in bulk to creameries. These three hundred new gallons represented, therefore, an increased income to farmers of £10 each day, or in a year more than three times the total cost of the advertising campaign. Further, the dairies profited in proportion, and undoubtedly milk consumption increased in the villages and towns which circle Aberdeen, and were reached by the advertising. — *S.T.*

THE Seasons of the Year in Wales. It is an unlucky person who has no opportunity of seeing the pageant of spring on the mountains of Snowdonia. Wales is most beautiful in the early days of spring and in the early autumn. In spring we watch the winter snow on the hills fighting a losing battle with the sun. Slowly but very surely we behold the green mountain sward climbing higher and higher until at last it ousts the snow completely and mingles with the heather. Summer shows the country and mountain sides dressed in their fullness, every tree and every bush giving forth its utmost. Late September and October see the wooded slopes once again in their glory, their now multi-coloured seared beauty comparable only with the fresh beauty of spring.

GATHERINGS of the People. Eisteddfodau, competitive meetings, point-to-point meetings, and ploughing matches are giving way to sheep-dog trials, singing festivals, carnivals and sports. A gathering of great interest, the Harlech Festival held in June, brings a large number of European and American enthusiasts. All Welsh life centres round the Royal National Eisteddfod which is held yearly during the first week in August. Every other Eisteddfod, festival, and



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Cymanfa is but a preparation; here music, art and literature have their expression. While there are many people in Britain who have not yet paid the great Eisteddfod a visit there are scores of people who make the journey every year from Australia, New Zealand, China and America; for them it is less a journey than a pilgrimage. Swansea will be the Mecca of Welsh children this summer. Their Olympic sports are to be held there under the auspices of Urdd Gobaith Cymru Fach (the League of Hope of the Children of Wales). This movement, which is similar to the scout movement, numbers 50,000. On Goodwill Day the yearly message of the children of Wales was broadcast for the eleventh year in succession from almost every station in the world. The message spoke of the world being 'like a big village now that we have been brought within hearing distance of each other'. A gratifying sign is the large number of summer schools this year, run by the Workers' Educational Association, local education authorities and other bodies. Courses are given in every conceivable subject and the courses are well booked up in advance. Coleg Harlech shows signs of having a record year. During the spring the Society for the Preservation of Rural Wales has been very active and has been lucky in obtaining the services of good speakers. The hiking movement has had a great impetus from the establishment of a chain of delightfully situated Youth Hostels. The settlement of the flag question at the splendid old castle of Caernarvon was welcomed by the whole country, and the two flags will be flying together for many a long day. Beaumaris Castle has been greatly improved by the work carried out by the Office of Works. – *J.W.H.*

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Problems and Incidents of Bird Life

THE Sparrow Hawk and her Young. I have photographed three hen sparrow hawks at the nest. The hen attends to the feeding of the young when in the nest and the male bird does the hunting; but when the young attain the age of about three weeks, and their requirements increase, the food supply is augmented by the hen hunting near at home. The average feeding periods occur about every two and a half hours. From this a rough calculation can be made of the number of victims taken per day by one pair of birds for their young alone. Feeding over, the hen may attend to her toilet. With her feathers ruffled out, she loses to some extent her fierce look, and appears more like a contented hen pheasant which has just had a dust bath. The male bird calls upon his arrival with food. He has a favourite tree, possibly two, and upon his chosen branch he plucks the prey. The hen, who is never far away, alights almost noiselessly on the nest. Always is she wary after alighting, standing still with the prey under one foot. Small pieces of flesh are violently plucked from the prey, but are daintily offered to the young. The strongest and most hungry usually obtain more than their fair share, but towards the end of the feed a backward chick will be looked after. The entrails of the prey are never offered. These are either dropped over the side of the nest or eaten by the hen. The prey consists in my experience, almost entirely of birds. I saw no trace of game. When watching one nest from my hide I noticed that the hen was not the bird I had photographed five or six days before. The general plumage was different, so also was the size of the bird, and some white spots the size of a shilling, which had been most noticeable, were absent. This stepmother successfully reared the chicks. I can only conclude that the actual mother had been killed, and the male bird had found a hen who took over the rearing of the young. Such a thing has been known in the case of the


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peregrine falcon. It is strange that should a hen sparrow hawk get killed before the young are able to feed themselves, they may perish by hunger, although around them is food in plenty brought by the male bird. He does not seem to know that he must not only bring food but tear it up and offer it. – *W. P. Green*

WHO takes the Larch Cones? To the interesting note on the crossbills I should like to add the fact that, when not residents, they are normally winter visitors. You



Sketch on the left shows the crossbill's work

can always tell whether a larch cone has been wrenched off by a crossbill or come off in the ordinary way or by the agency of squirrels. – *A.W.*

TAME Sparrows. Is there any real foundation for the belief that sparrows are difficult to tame? Miss Mayer's story in the April COUNTRYMAN reminds me of a sparrow nestling picked up before it was fully feathered and brought up by my people on what it was supposed might be suitable food. The creature thrived, and got its suit of feathers, but, perhaps because the food was not entirely appropriate, the feathers all came out again until it was absolutely naked. This indecent but friendly object would take food from our plates and peck us if we resisted its depredations. Eventually the feathers were renewed, and on a day when the window was open, the bird flew away. – *N.*

NUTS for Birds. After reading the article in THE COUNTRYMAN, 'Taming Nuthatches', I bought some barcelona nuts. But with barcelonas at ninepence a pound, and the nuthatches taking anything up to twenty a day,

BECAUSE WE THOUGHT EMERSON WAS RIGHT

'If a man can preach a better sermon, write a better book, or make a better mousetrap than his neighbour, though he build his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten track to his door'

TO have doubled our business within the last ten years; to have maintained a steady increase even through the unprecedented industrial depression; to have done this entirely through the recommendations of our customers, who now number almost 100,000, seems to point to the high quality of the work we do. If we were asked to find reasons why our work is better (and we are always being told that it is) we would say unhesitatingly 'because we spend more money on doing each job we receive'. That is the fact of the matter. But it costs us less to get the orders. There's the compensating factor. We do not usually seek orders; they come to us. We do not maintain a chain of collecting depots; our customers send the work to us through the post.

We have been told by many of our customers that it is no greater inconvenience to them to have clothes parcelled and despatched to us by post than it is to hand them in at a receiving depot which can rarely be nearer than the nearest post office.

ARE WE OF SERVICE TO 'COUNTRYMAN' READERS?

We have put this advertisement in THE COUNTRYMAN *because it seemed to us that its readers would probably be glad to know of a cleaning and dyeing service such as ours, and because, naturally, we wish to extend our business. We should, therefore, be glad if, when sending us an order, you would mention having seen this advertisement in* THE COUNTRYMAN *If results prove us to have been wrong in our surmise, obviously we shall cease to advertise here*

TURNBULLS LTD *Cleaners & Dyers* HAWICK SCOTLAND

I began to experiment with other nuts. Now I buy every week a pound of peanuts which all the tits and the nuthatches seem to like. A handful will disappear while I am at breakfast. I shell most of them, and split the larger ones, as the tits find them awkward to carry away whole. Twice a nuthatch has tried to wedge a barcelona in the bricks of an old shed in the garden, but each time the nut fell. The nuthatches endeavour to pick up two or three half peanuts at a time, but can seldom manage more than one. – *T.M.J.*

GOLDCREST and Wood Mouse. Golden-crested wrens nest in my garden every year, and usually in the same situation – the light little pocket slung under the end of a branch of spruce. I have had them in other situations, once low down in an Irish yew, so that I could look at the young birds day by day till they flew; once breast-high in a golden yew, and that was a nest which somehow tumbled sideways and tipped out one of the babies, but which I sewed up with wool so that the mother came back to it; and once I had a nest in a gorse bush. But this year I have one in a situation which is unique in my experience. One morning early in May I saw a small bird carry a feather into a gorse bush near where a gold-crest nested once before. I watched, and when the bird returned with another feather I saw that it was a gold-crest I looked for its nest. All that I could find, low down in a clipped gorse bush, was the nest, woven of dry grass with an opening at the side, of a wood mouse, Mus sylvaticus wintoni. So I watched further, and soon there was no doubt about it, the little bird was lining the mouse's nest with feathers. And as I write on May 18th she is sitting on her eggs, and will let me come and look at her quite closely, with her head among the feathers just inside the opening. It is not unusual for one bird to adopt another's nest; I have had a blackbird line and lay eggs in a thrush's nest from which the young birds had just flown, and once a spotted fly-catcher took over an old chaffinch's nest which my

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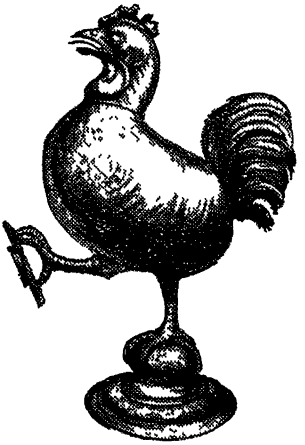
small boy had taken down and placed in a Japanese honeysuckle on the house wall. But I have never heard of a goldcrest using a wood mouse's ball of plaited grass, and I am waiting to examine the nest when the young birds have left it. – *E.P.*

THE Struggle with Starlings. With reference to Mr. C. W. Greatorex's notes, during the late winter months flocks of starlings descended in such numbers here as to darken the pens on a large chicken rearing farm. The starlings gobbled more than half of the daily rations. Small mirrors slung so as to whirl and flash acted for a day or so only. Gun fire kept them off for half an hour. Hoppers removed to the coops with the hen on guard stopped depredations a bit, but the chicks suffered. Netting covering the tops of a dozen pens makes all safe but increases the work and means expense. Sparrowhawks and owls are increasing in this neighbourhood, but I have not observed one chasing a starling, perhaps because there are plenty of smaller birds about. – *G.W.S.*

I should have thought that most starlings had gone to roost before the owls came out. With us shrubberies have been destroyed by starlings nesting in them and woods have been so injured that young trees have had to be felled. – *W.*

PREPARING for Flight. I am no ornithologist, but it is possible that even an ornithologist or two may have shared my curiosity as to how five thrushes closely packed all their days into a nest, suddenly find themselves able to fly, without any preliminary exercise. The other day I came gently on a thrush's nest to which I have been a daily visitor since the first eggs were laid. The nestlings, as afterwards appeared, were within about three days of departing. One of them was standing up in the nest and vigorously and painstakingly preening itself. It took special pains with its wings, each quill of which it seemed to put through its beak. Obviously if it is the habit of nestlings to do this kind

By Courtesy of the British Museum



The Silver Cockerel of Nuremburg

What care the master craftsmen of 1570 must have lavished on their silver masterpieces! In these days, too — there is much of the same love of silverware alive. Decorative silver will always have a place of honour: domestic plate is as useful as it is pleasing: and for both of these, Silvo is the ideal cleaner. Silvo quickly gives a bright and beautiful surface—to Silver, Sheffield and Electro plate, and it is safe to use as it contains neither acid nor mercury.

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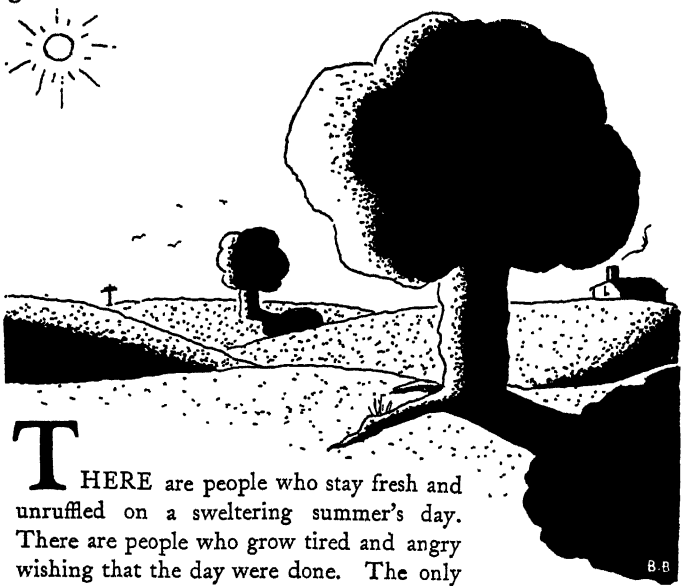
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of thing they must come to have some use of their muscles, and short flights can present no difficulty. – *P.S.D.*

THE Lamentable Story of a London Pigeon. Out of my window I have watched for some weeks past a tussle between a pigeon and a piece of wire. The wire is the loose end of a telephone line. About four feet of it hangs dangling beside a chimney. Each day the pigeon returns, takes the end of the wire in its beak and tugs and tugs. The poor pigeon wants to build a nest. The motorist has made London stingy of hay, even a stray wisp or two from a horse's dinner bag. – *E.J.*

THE Farmer's Friend from the Sea. One of the most notable things in bird life is the increasing abundance of the black-headed gull, otherwise known as blackcap gull, hooded mew, masked gull, peewit gull, and pickmire. One of these birds that had injured a wing by collision with a telegraph-wire, lived in my garden for months, becoming so tame that it would take food from my hand. In a couple of hours this bird devoured twenty-five leatherjackets, ten wireworms, four slugs, and eight cabbage-moth caterpillars. The black-headed gull is partial to field-mice, and one observer records having witnessed a combat between a huge buck rat and several gulls. Mr. Kearton told me he had seen a couple of gulls pull a harvest-mouse's nest to pieces, and swallow parents and young. No decomposing carcass, be it of dog, cat, hare, rabbit, or rat, lies festering for long in field or meadow frequented by black-headed gulls. – *C.W.G.*

PERSECUTED Beauty. Perseveringly, spring after spring, the gorgeous hoopoe visits south and east Anglia. Once he has walked, daintily waving his crest, in the very middle of your garden path, in London, within four miles of Charing Cross, seemingly trustful and at home (and that not so many years ago!) you wonder if with encouragement this most beautiful bird might not become plentiful. – *C.C.*



THERE are people who stay fresh and unruffled on a sweltering summer's day. There are people who grow tired and angry wishing that the day were done. The only difference between the two is that the first have found the golden rule of health. To be fresh—you must be free from clogging, heating poisons. Doctors — for sixty years—have recommended Eno's 'Fruit Salt' as a safe and sufficient preventive for constipation. That is why wise men and women take a dash of Eno in a glass of water—before they do anything else. That is how they make the cool of the morning last all day.

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The Pearling Month

by J. D. U. Ward

JULY and August, when the rivers run shallow, are the two busiest months for the pearl fishers of Great Britain. In Scotland, and possibly in Northern England and Wales, pearls are still taken from the big black mussels (Unio margaritiferus) which inhabit many streams. The better Scottish pearls now fetch from £1 to £10 per grain, and Professor James Ritchie, of Aberdeen University, kindly informed the writer that he had seen two pearls, each worth £300, which had been taken from Scottish rivers within the last ten years. Other persons could – if they would – give notice of finds in Wales and Northern England. Everybody knows the statement of Suetonius that the pearls of Britain were partly responsible for Caesar's invasion. It is uncertain, however, whether these pearls came from U. margaritiferus or from Mytilus edulis, the common mussel of the sea, whose pearls are inferior. However this may be, British pearls are mentioned by Tacitus, Origen and Bebe. In the 16th and 17th centuries many fine Scottish pearls were taken and for a short time the Crown held a monopoly. In the next century Pennant wrote of the pearls taken in the Tay and Isla rivers that 'from 1761 to 1764, £10,000 worth were sent to London'. In Kunz and Stevenson's 'Book of the Pearl' it is stated that 'the value of the catch in Scotland in 1864 was estimated at £12,000 to the fishermen'. Though some fine pearls have been taken from U. margaritiferus in the upper reaches of the river Conway, most of the North Wales pearls were derived from M. edulis at the estuary. Pearls were found in Cumberland in the 16th century and 'fair as Irton pearls' was a local proverb. Unio margaritiferus is to be found in the Isle of Man and in certain rivers in Devon and Cornwall. In recent years the value of the annual British catch, even of fresh-water pearls, is probably quite small.

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Wild Life and Tame

TRAGEDY in the Rock Garden Pool. Early on the morning of March 19, my gardener came up to the house to tell me that he had seen a mouse fighting with a frog in a pool in the rock garden. The mouse, he said, had pulled the frog out of the water on to a ledge of stone and was eating it. I went down with him to the rock garden, and on the way he told me that he had not been able to see clearly what kind of a mouse it was, owing to the struggle in the water and the fact that the ledge of stone lay in a crevice in the dark, but that he thought it was black with a blunt nose. This puzzled me, for I could think of no mouse answering to his description. When we came to the pond, I saw the body of the frog lying on a ledge half in and half out of the water, but no mouse with it. I pulled the frog out – it was feebly kicking – and saw that the neck, shoulders and part of the back were eaten away. I decided to watch through the morning and started back to the house to get my work, when the gardener called to me that the mouse had caught another frog. And there, under water, was a dark, shining form battling with a full-grown frog, which was kicking hard to loose itself from a hold on its hind leg. It kicked itself free, and the dark form swam rapidly out of sight. Presently it emerged, swimming very fast with a curious zigzag movement over the floor of the pond, disappearing under lily leaves and reappearing, but I could not get a proper view. I saw it catch hold of another full grown frog. but that, too, kicked itself free. This hunting went on for a quarter of an hour or so, the creature at intervals leaving the water to enter a crevice here and there among the rocks which form the side of the pool. At last I saw its head clear. My gardener had been mistaken – it had a long sharp nose and I saw at once that it was a water-shrew. And I stayed by the pool for an hour, during which time it caught hold of four full grown frogs, all of which got free, and a baby

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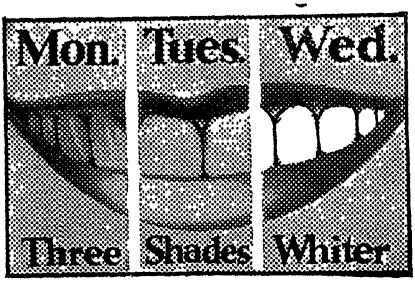
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orfe four or five inches long, which it brought up to the surface by the tail, but which slithered away among lily leaves. And at last I marked the shrew down into a hole among the rocks, where I saw that I might have a chance of catching him. My gardener quickly fetched a 'run-through' mouse trap, which we banked in with sods so that if the shrew came out it must run into the trap, and I went on with my work. Within half an hour the gardener called to me that the shrew was in the trap, and I went to pick up the trap and look at him. There he was, savagely worrying the perforated zinc with his long, sharp teeth. He seemed not the least alarmed, merely furious. The gardener picked up the dead frog lying by the pond, and held it near the zinc. The shrew flew at it, dragged in a fore-leg and ate the leg before our eyes. And so, after having had a good look at him, I let him go and he dived into the pool again. I have seen him several times since, but so far as I know he has caught no more frogs. But what has interested me is that I can find no other record of a water shrew attacking full-grown frogs. The books tell you that water shrews eat frog spawn, tadpoles, aquatic insects and so on, and I once saw a baby water shrew – possibly the same shrew – hunting in the same rock garden pool, I supposed for water shrimps which I knew were there. I cannot hope to have added a new fact to natural history, but perhaps I may have added a new record. – *E.P.*

THE Fish and the Snake. One fine spring morning, sitting on a low wall on the shore of Lake Lugano, we became aware of a movement in the water below us. A brown snake was trying to push its way out of the water. It held in its jaws a fish about eight inches long. Every now and then the snake slid back into deep water and floated exhausted for a few moments, still however holding tight to its fish. At last the snake, turning round, pushed itself up the rocks tail first, and finding leverage in this position,

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succeeded in reaching dry land where it wriggled away and was soon lost to view. – *D.H.D.*

HENS and Stoats. Many times I have seen stoats killing rabbits among my poultry. The birds were massed with their heads in the air uttering grotesque notes of surprise, protest and deprecation, but were not afraid of the marauder. – *Richard Crawshay*

IN a Magpie's Nest. A Scottish farmer who suspected two magpies that lived in a nearby wood of stealing the eggs of hens that laid away, and also small chicks, said to me: 'Coming to a tall pine tree, I saw a cloud of sparrows, yellowhammers and other small birds, circling fussily, so I sent a boy up to investigate. He could just reach a magpie nest with a stick and sent it hurtling through the air. The nest had scarcely cleared the branches when a reddish brown animal fell or leapt out of it, landing at my feet. I stunned him, a fine pine marten. The nest contained a multitude of feathers, including the magpie's, and one small chicken partly eaten.' – *J.M.*

THE Erd Shrew Mystery. I have often found on roads the bodies of erd shrews or shrew mice, and wondered how they came there. Recently I found no fewer than ten in a lane. They were lying at intervals of from three to twenty yards, the last two being warm. I was looking at these when I heard a number of piercing little squeaks. I looked up and saw, ten feet away, two little shrews struggling. Finally, one lay still. The victor turned, saw me for the first time, struggled along for a few yards, then also dropped, dead! I found several minute teeth marks on his throat. I then examined all the others and discovered similar marks on every one. – *M.C.*

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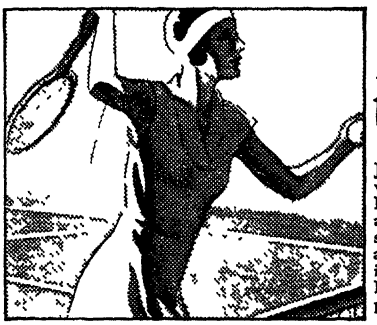
Local Government and Administration

A New Field for Economy?

PETTY versus Quarter Sessions. The noblest of us are a bit inclined at times to compound for sins we are inclined to by damning those we have no mind to. On the question of public economy are we really willing, in the Parliamentary phrase, to explore every avenue? The other day a poor devil, with a long term of service and a good character, sapped by ill-health and drugs, pleaded guilty at petty sessions to defalcations to the amount of £70 or so. All the facts were before the bench, and all that advocates could say for and against the defendant was said. Why should it be necessary, in such a case, to send the accused to sessions or assizes? The magistrates had it in their power to punish up to six months. Certainly the accused will not get more from the judge. He wanted to be dealt with by his neighbours. Why should he not have been? A serious case? No doubt. But imprisonment from justices punishes just as severely as imprisonment by a judge. And think of the expense imposed on the rates by the sessions or assizes procedure! As likely as not this will be the only case for trial. – *D.M.*

A LANDOWNER'S Regrets. There are doubting Thomases who wonder what good the regional planning committees are really doing. Evidence of what is being steadily accomplished is contained in a letter which the chairman of one of these committees received the other day. 'I am only sorry', wrote a landowner to him, 'that the committee was not at work years ago. It would have saved me from putting up some cottages of the appearance of which I am now heartily ashamed.' – *Yorkshire*

SEVERAL Houses for One. Unless there is considerable wealth apart from the freehold, it is now almost impossible for a large estate to remain in one family for three genera-



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tions. Estates which come into the market are as often as not seized upon by a speculator who has little regard for anything but a quick turnover. When one house in extensive grounds is replaced by many houses an opportunity is usually lost to create a new village of real merit; and as often as not, avenues or groups of trees are slaughtered. But, as we all know, these are not the only ways in which the face of England is being changed. There is the part played by the giant steel towers for carrying great voltages of electric power. The Oxford Preservation Trust and the Witney Planning Committee have between them found high and low tension routes which do not interfere with the amenities of village or countryside. The suitable siting of main towers is an excellent exercise. Low tension service poles can be placed as far as possible out of sight in back lanes or gardens. Some duplication may be involved, but this is well worth pressing for, and may even hasten the time when such services will be placed underground. Mere museum pieces of villages will decay, and in time become insanitary and revolting, but much may be done by sane and honest restoration, and by considered additions. The future of some modernist work is not at all clear, but Professor Abercrombie has suggested zoning for it. It might be encouraged in entirely new settlements like Silver End Garden Village, the home of a metal window industry. – *T.*

NEEDLESS Cruelty. – It is a great pity that *Pistol v. Poleaxe, a Handbook of Humane Slaughter*, by Lettice Macnaghten, with a foreword by Lord Lee of Fareham, and a preface by a distinguished veterinarian ((Chapman and Hall, pp. 603, 94 illus., 21*s.*) should be such a huge book. A condensed edition at a low price ought soon to be on sale. For three years and a half it has been illegal in Scotland to use the pole-axe, and the experience of Scotland and other countries has demonstrated that the objections to the introduction of mechanical killers are baseless. It is to be hoped



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that before long by the activity or the sympathy of every meat-eater, 'a condition of things for which there is to-day no possible excuse' – the words are those of the Ministry of Agriculture – 'will become no more than an ugly memory.' An official report (Corporation of London) states that it was found that, with 'a skilled man working under reasonable conditions', 100 bulls required 250 blows to produce unconsciousness. The brutality attending the slaughter of sheep and pigs may not bear thinking about but ought to be thought about. Every reader should find out from the clerk of his or her rural district council whether the humane by-laws are in operation and give every possible support to national legislation.

KEEPING Footpaths Open. Judging from our correspondence, a sixpenny pamphlet, *The Maintenance of Public Footpaths*, by Sir Lawrence Chubb and Mr. R. A. Glen, LL.B., just issued by the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society, Eccleston Square, S.W., would be found useful by many of our readers. We are glad to see that an early COUNTRYMAN suggestion of getting school children to walk along the footpaths of their parish once a year, a kind of beating of the bounds, is being followed.

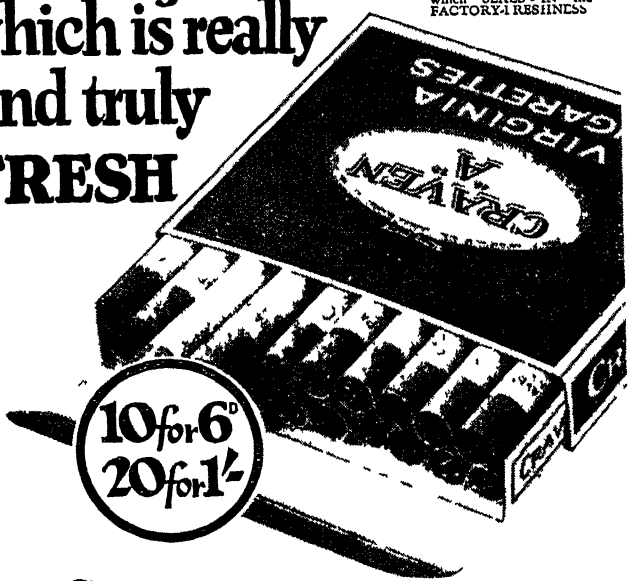
ON the Pilgrim's Way! A Surrey subscriber protests vigorously against the way in which the electricity pylons are being set up on the Pilgrim's Way. 'They have erected one on the very brow of Pebblecombe, and so that everybody may admire their handiwork they have felled pines for sixty feet on either side'!

ø

THE RAW SIDE. – I read the January issue with admiration and horror. I do congratulate you on the Bruern Abbey article. One is still struck all of a heap when anyone has the courage to publish the raw side of the sheep skin about bygone pastoralities. – *Sylvia Townsend Warner*

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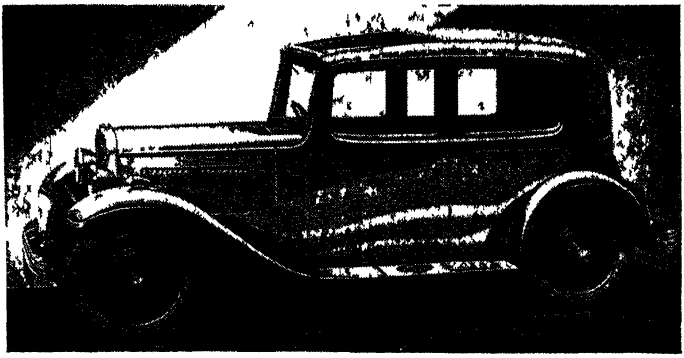
The First Year on My Farm

IN our last issue we summarized the experiences of a young farmer who started in September as a farmer-owner in the south of England with the advantage of a Colonial experience which had taught him to work. In the following notes he carries on the story himself.

January. A somewhat trying month owing to the simultaneous arrival of lambs and piglings during the worst weather which we have experienced so far, heavy south-westerly gales and much rain. We were compelled to keep the ewes in the lambing-yard and the barn a great deal more than was good for them. Towards the end of the month we had over 70 lambs strong enough to go out to the fold by day. Meanwhile breeding-runs had to be got ready for the pigs, hitherto in a straw-yard. This job, which had been delayed while ploughing was overtaken, was necessarily rushed, and not altogether satisfactory, owing to the sodden state of the ground. However, we managed to get the gilts settled in before they farrowed, and had 23 pigs in three litters. Moral, don't invest in pigs before you have plenty of accommodation. What with the lambing and the pigs, field-work has had something of a check; but with the aid of an extra hand we have completed the dunging and ploughing of our potato-land. With three horses in a digger-plough we have been going 9 inches deep, thereby destroying the hard dry pan left by the former tenant's tractor. In addition, we have made a start on the grassland, triple-harrowing, followed by 8 cwts of slag per acre, probably the first real treatment it has ever had.

February. An amazingly dry month, so that we have at last been able to get on top of the work. During the first week we threshed three ricks on our exposed ridge, and made a start with the spring sowing, putting in both tares and oats. The land, though heavy, worked well, but we were too early. The ensuing cold spell drove us back to dung-carting;

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Four-cylinder engine; tax £10; coil ignition, 6-volt electric lighting and starting: 6-gallon rear petrol tank; semi-elliptic springing; five wire wheels and complete equipment.

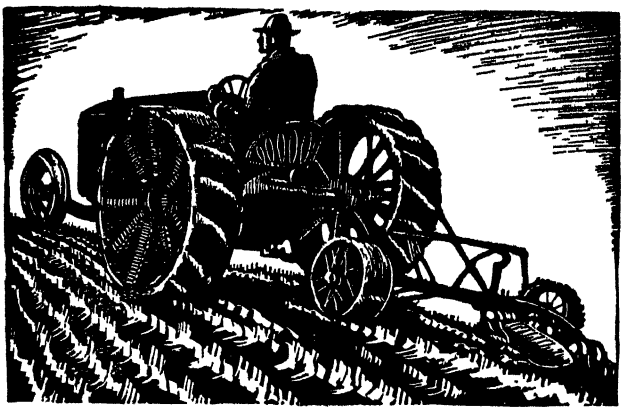
AUSTIN

READ THE AUSTIN MAGAZINE FOURPENCE EVERY MONTH

The Austin Motor Company Ltd., Longbridge, Birmingham Showrooms, also Service Station for the Austin Seven and Ten-Four: 479-483 Oxford Street, London W.1. Showrooms and Service Station. Holland Park Hall, W.11.

having plenty of horses, we were able to draw about 100 good loads to our poorest field, its first dressing for 20 years. The drought continuing, we finished oat-sowing on the 22nd, rolled and harrowed most of the winter corn, and have actually been able to cross-plough our stickiest field. Unfortunately, however, it has been both too cold and too dry for germination, so that the oats have simply lain in the ground, a prey to rooks. Of course we dress all our seed, thereby giving ourselves endless trouble in drilling; but in the case of oats, the rooks can shell off the husk and eat the uncontaminated kernel, while they are much too cunning to be shot without protracted stalking. We have lost a number of good ewes with 'turned' lambs. During the month, we have enlarged our zig-zag harrows into a four-leaf set, and changed the drill from pole to shafts, so that we now work almost entirely on a 3-horse basis. Sixteen acres is now quite an easy day's work for the harrows, and the quicker pace in the drill undoubtedly means a better delivery.

March. A dry March after an exceptionally dry February has left everything very backward. The drought has enabled us to get the thresher in and out with unwonted ease, and to have a good deal of hillside ploughing done; on our steeper land we find the best plan is to plough two furrows down and one up with the double-furrows; this is appreciably quicker than ploughing across the slope with single-furrows, besides resulting in better work. The ground seemed too dry and cold for barley sowing, but we got in 20 acres at the end of the month, just before the rain. We have also rolled and harrowed the wheat, which is no better than anybody else's, being patchy and rather backward. Lambing is now over, except for a few stragglers, and we have sold our first 'draw' of fat lambs. The crop has been a fair one for a first season, and the lambs are doing well, but we must find a handier and less exposed site for the flock next year, and also try to get them a little earlier; November – December should be the best lambing period here. Both cattle and pigs have



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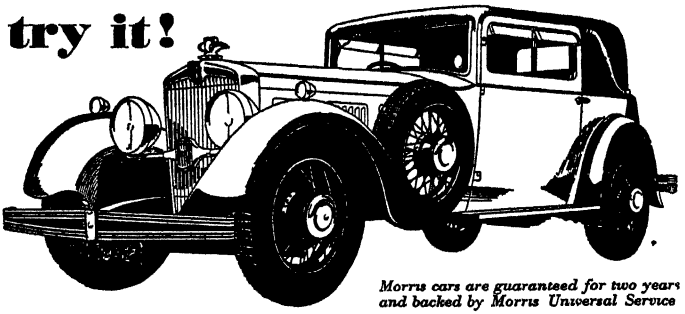
SHELL-MEX and B.P. Ltd

done well, but markets are most discouraging. Our chief revenue lately has been from the sale of surplus mangels. The only purchase of note is an eighth horse, which now gives us two 3-horse teams and two reservists for odd jobs.

April. A month of mixed weather, but mainly cold, so that all growth has been kept back and stock have not made as much progress as they should. Owing to the inevitable delays at entry last Michaelmas, our spring-programme has been a heavy one, but we have now finished the barley (38 acres) and potatoes (8 acres); unfortunately the latter had sprouted rather strongly in bags before we could plant them, but with Scotch and Irish seed on good well-manured land we hope the loss of vitality will not be serious. For some years to come we shall be leaning rather heavily on potatoes, both for cash and as a cleaning crop. During the wetter periods we have done a lot towards preparing the meadows for mowing, by digging ant-hills, burning brambles, picking off fallen wood and tearing out dead grass. It is extraordinary how much work results from a few years of neglect, even on grassland. Finished threshing on the 21st. Out of two big wheat-ricks we got 96 sacks of best, 19 of tail, 153 rats, innumerable mice, and several weasels. How many rats there would have been without the weasels it is hard to say. Our terrier covered herself with bites and glory. Our sales have commenced, and a good job too, as the overdraft has been growing quicker than anything else on the farm. We have now sold 50 lambs at an average of about 44*s.*, a big drop in price from last year, though quite as much as others are getting for good tegs fully twice the weight of the lambs.

May. Spring has come at last. After a couple of white frosts, the month has been a succession of warm showers, interspersed with welcome periods of sunshine. Both crops and stock have gone ahead amazingly, and the trefoil will be ready for the mower in a few days time. Our new hay-making machinery has begun to arrive – a low-hoppered elevator (second-hand), an expanding horse-rake, and a new

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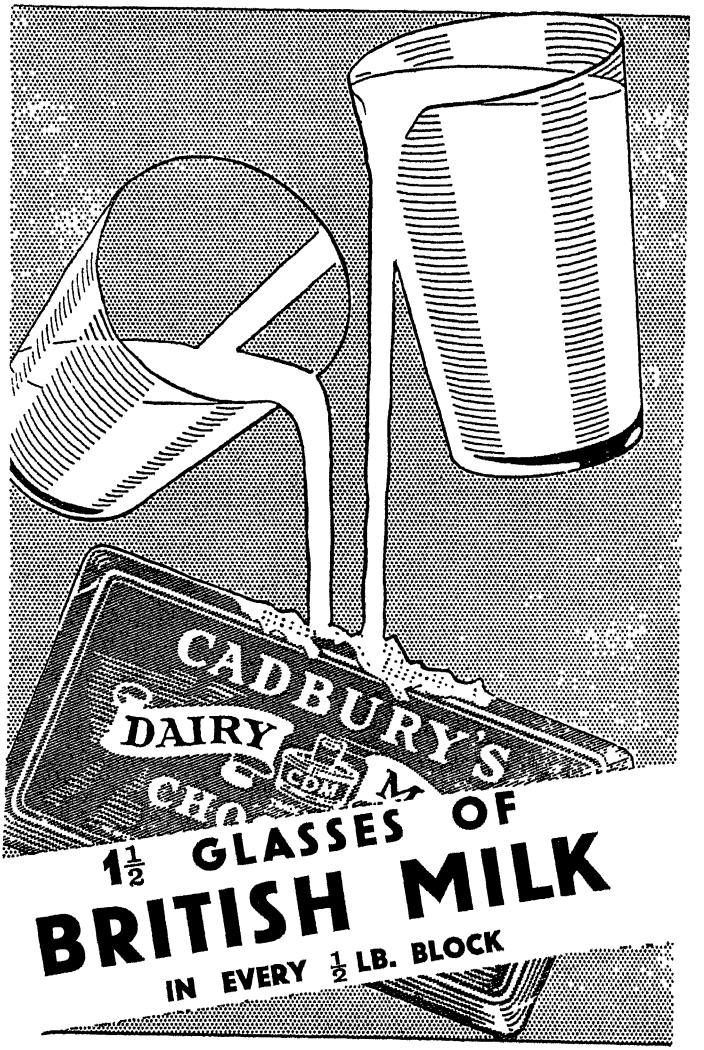
service advg MI4d

type of swathe-turner and side-delivery rake. At the same time, the weather has been a constant source of irritation to anyone endeavouring to sow mangels or grass-seeds; the ground has been in ideal condition but it would be possible to count on the fingers of one hand the days on which it was safe to use a roller, without which the planting of small seeds is almost impracticable. Three acres of mangels went in very well, though dirty (one cannot clean land in showery weather); the other 2 acres were rushed in somehow during a bright interval: it was our heaviest field and we dared not plough again lest we bring up 'pudden' which would bake to the consistency of iron castings. It has been the same with the grass-seeds – half-days with the barrow and roller, with the corn growing inches every week. There was an anxious period for stock, when they began to despise hay and to yearn for the grass which had not yet arrived; but the herbage is growing under them now, and with plenty of moisture in the ground our few acres of pasture should be able to summer all our stock.

(*To be continued*)

For Countrymen and Countrywomen – 22

1. Who invented the lawn-mower? – 2. About how many leaves are there on an average-sized elm, and what would be about their total area? – 3. What is our first record of a fatal sporting accident? – 4. Many species of American birds have reached England. How far across the Atlantic has a snake made its way from America? – 5. Who was the distinguished author who wrote, 'I promise you my oaks will outlast my laurels; I pique myself more upon my compositions for manure than on any other compositions whatsoever?' – 6. What rural novelist wrote, 'Crushed I am not yet, nor robbed of elasticity, nor of hope, nor quite of endeavour', and was afraid of cows? – Answers on page 541.


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1½ GLASSES OF
BRITISH MILK
IN EVERY ½ LB. BLOCK

Country House Catering – 10. *Feasten Cakes*

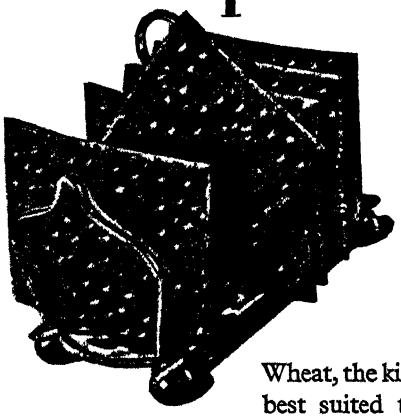
by An Innkeeper's Daughter

I AM going to give recipes for some local festival cakes and I need not say that I should welcome particulars of others. Who was 'Jennaway' who made pastry as follows, and where did he or she live? 'Take the weight of four eggs in flour, the same of sifted sugar, and the same of butter; mix the sugar, flour, and five whole eggs together and beat it with two wooden spoons for half an hour; warm the butter in a stew pan and add it to the other ingredients; bake the mixture in a shallow pan, or in small moulds.' All I know is that these directions are given in a small book I possess, 'To make Jennaway's Pastry'. [Query 'Genoese' anglicised.–ED.]

Bill's Bath Buns. 'And who was Bill?' I asked when someone gave me the recipe for these delicious buns. 'Bill' was Mr. Bill, a famous pastrycook of Leicester, and no farmer's wife would ever dream of going there without taking home some of the Bath buns for which he was famous. Then one day his wife, in a generous moment, gave the treasured 'receipt' to a friend, who, in 1927, when the Bills had been dead thirty years, gave it to me. And here it is: '2 lbs. flour, 6 oz. butter, 6 oz. castor sugar, 4 eggs, 2 oz. yeast, essence of lemon, ½ pint lukewarm milk, set to rise, for half an hour. Prove 1 hour. Sprinkle sugar over before baking.' Mr. and Mrs. Bill left no children and the business was sold. But the buns are still made, although those who were children on the farms forty and fifty years ago say they are not so good as they were. But that may be because the speakers are not so young as they were, or – it may be the truth. And here is a 'receipt' for

Rose Cakes, for which Louisa Hills of Market Weston, Suffolk, was famous from 1832 to 1881. She herself thought they were 'very good' and marked them accordingly in the little old manuscript book her great-niece has given me: '1½ lb. flour, 2 oz. butter, 6 oz. loaf sugar, a large spoonful

A crispbread that is all wheat



Wheat, the king of cereals, is the grain best suited to the people of these isles. So wheat—and British wheat at that—is the grain of which Peek Frean make the British crispbread, Vita-Weat. The whole of the berry goes into it, with all its precious vitamins. There never was a crispbread so full of nourishment, so helpful to the internal organs, so kind to the digestion, so pleasant to eat—*or so conducive to the preservation of one's youthful slimness.* Put Vita-Weat on the table at every meal instead of ordinary bread or toast.

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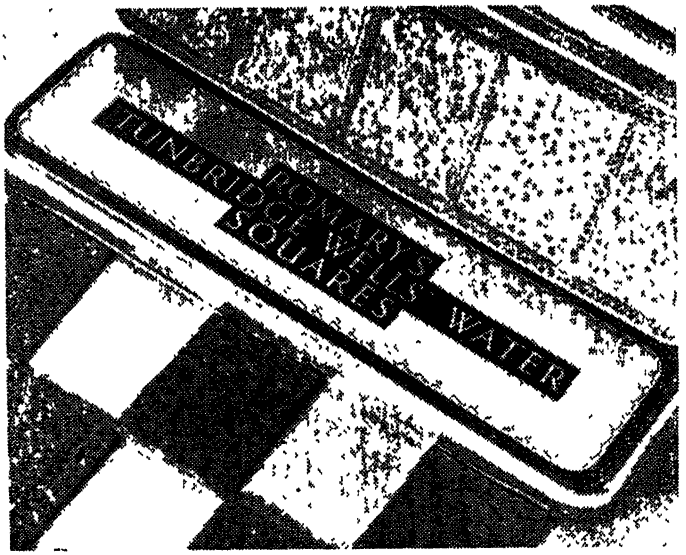
of rose water (this is a kitchen spoonful about as big as a table gravy spoonful). Rub in the butter, mix in the sugar, make into a dough with the rose water, and a little more water if necessary, roll out thin, cut into little cakes and bake.'

Now who can help me? I want information which must be up to date, about any Feasten cakes, especially about the following. (I should like the recipe, and the name and address of any present-day maker. A sample cake would be of course delightful):

'*Shittles*' *or* '*Plum Shuttles*' are or were lozenge-shaped buns, containing currants and carraways, and were given to children and old people on Valentine's Day. The bakers' name for them is 'Valentine-buns', and in 1880 they were said to be still carried round for sale in the same manner as Hot Cross Buns on Good Friday. I believe they belong to Glaston, near Uppingham. They are or were called 'Plum Shuttles' at Market Overton, Rutlandshire.

Jumbals are said to be a particular kind of thin little cake, in the form of S, made of something like seedcake, but hard and crisp, with caraways in them, and about three inches long and the eighth of an inch thick. Bosworth is said to be famous for the best specimens of this cake. In Dr. Adam Littleton's Latin Dictionary, 1703, he says 'striblita' were tarts or kinds of cake twisted about like a rope.

If I get the information I want I shall include it, with sender's name, in a second book I am preparing for next spring to succeed my 'Good Things in England', which, although it contains 853 recipes, includes a fraction only of England's culinary wealth. I should like my readers to understand that all the money I earn by writing about English Folk Cookery goes to pay the expenses of research. It costs money to travel all over England in order to get direct information; it costs money also to maintain an experimental kitchen for testing recipes. So far the money received has not nearly covered the expenses.



A Sandwich 'Superfection'

Two hunks of bread and a lump of cheese will make a sandwich—of sorts. But if you would know what a sandwich can be, make one with the new 'Tunbridge Wells' Water Squares. Tasting is better than believing, so write Dept. B for a sample tin, 6d.

From all leading grocers, in tins, 1s. 9d.

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The Voice of the Native

1. *The Thatcher*

THERE ain't nothing can beat a dumplin'. When my son and me was down in Wilt Shire last summer, thatchin' we missed 'em terrible. Our landlady, she say, if I'll tell her how to make 'em she'll have a try. So I kind o' 'splained to her as best I could, and one Sunday she made some. Man alive, you never see such things! Could 'a played football with 'em, and little totty things an' all, no bigger than the palm of your hand. Eat 'em? 'Tain't likely. Couldn't get 'em down! There was a man staying with us two Bank Holidays ago, hadn't seen a dumplin' for twenty-five year. He ate four on 'em right away. There was another on the dish, and I axed him if he wouldn't have that one. 'No', he say, 'I've done my share an' all; but I hadn't eaten a dumplin' for twenty-five year, and I wanted to make sure'. – *B.N.*

2. *The Midwife*

SAID toothless, good hearted capable old Mercy, who nursed the sick, laid out the dead, did a bit of upholstery and was in regular request as a midwife: 'Well I brings most of 'em into the world and I touches them up to go out of it. I likes to see 'em christened, for it saves a lot of trouble in the burying.' – *E.E.H.E.*

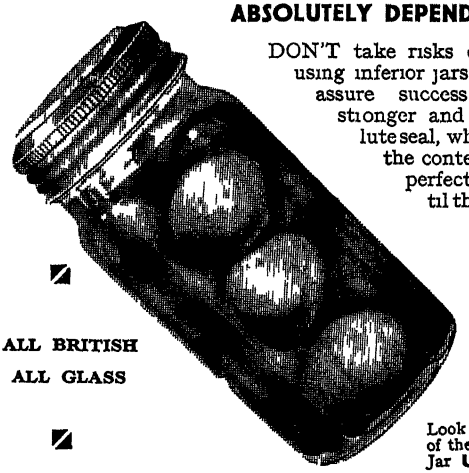
3. *The Old Parson*

IN my boyhood we had no vestry, and so the vicar, except on communion Sundays, placed his hat and stick on the communion table, and, having unhung and donned his surplice, would proceed to the reading desk. An old clerk not only led the responses but gave out notices. 'Let us sing', he said, 'to the prize and glowry of God the —— psalm'. Once the number of his psalm was challenged from the gallery, 'It aint the 76th; its the 72nd'. 'Well I could only see the "7" ' was the clerk's reply, after which the music struck up. – *W.J.L.*

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The Country House Aeroplane—14

THE cause of the country house aeroplane has been aided enormously by the publication of David Garnett's notes from a diary he kept when learning to fly (*A Rabbit in the Air*, Chatto and Windus, pp. 127, 5*s*.). We know no book which is at once so convincing, so informing, so simple, so sound and so well and fairly written. Mechanically-endowed folk, men and women who take with zest to machinery and meet with no problems in a car, make their way to the air: the author of 'Lady into Fox' shows us the artistic temperament in the clouds. He describes straightforwardly exactly how he feels and exactly what he gets out of his experiences. He could not be more candid or more practical. And he winds up in true countryman style: 'My own plane will be stowed away in a lonely barn between a hay-tedder and a turn-rake. I shall neglect it for weeks at a time, but then one morning when there are big white clouds and the spring air is soft, I shall unlock the barn door and there the plane will be. As I edge round it a brown hen will fly up cackling from her clutch of eggs in the cockpit. There will be a thick layer of hay dust over everything, sparrows will have dropped straws from their nests and have made messes on the wings. I shall prop open the double doors, and, lifting the machine by the tail, push her out into the sunlight to look her over carefully. Then I shall swing out the wings and lock them, unhook and fold away the jury-struts and kick the chocks into place under the wheels. Then, after flooding the carburettor, turn the propeller once or twice to suck in, switch on, and seizing the propeller blade, give her one good swing. As I jolt along, taxi-ing out into the sixteen acre field, there will be no one within sight, not one living thing to watch me and nothing in the sky except a lark or two. And then, when I've strapped myself in and turned into the wind, I shall take off alone and unobserved into the empty sky.' A countryman free not only of the countryside but of the air.

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to human health. These minerals are entirely absent from refined sugar and its many products, and seriously deficient in all white flour commodities, ordinary cereals, *boiled* vegetables, etc.

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¶ Mr. Saxon is co author of 'The Complete Guide to Sound, Successful and Attractive Food Reform,' now in its eighth edition

¶ Associated with The Health Centre under Mr Saxon's direction are: The Vitamin Café, 419 Oxford Street, W 1 (Ambassador 2111), and The Saxon School of Food Reform (cookery and food preparation), 46 Lancaster Gate, W 2 (Paddington 8900)

A Saving to our Subscribers

MY friend, the late St. Loe Strachey, had many excellent ideas, among others what he called 'life membership of the "Spectator" '. He had an actuarial calculation made of the sums for which readers, of different ages, might, with advantage to themselves, compound for a Life Subscription. Now that THE COUNTRYMAN is well established and half through its Sixth Year, we are imitating this plan. In future, therefore, subscribers are receiving THE COUNTRYMAN *for life* by making payments at the following rates:

Under	45	*Years of Age*	...	...	...	...	...	£5	5	0
Over	45	"	and under	55	years	...	...	4	18	0
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As will be seen, the rates work out favourably. Further, the arrangement is convenient both to subscribers and ourselves. Subscribers are now spared the trouble of making frequent remittances and of never being quite sure when a subscription is due. On our side, rendering (and sometimes re-rendering) accounts, receipt-sending and considerable postages, not to speak of book-keeping, are avoided. Already a number of subscribers have taken advantage of this Life Subscription system.

Subscribers who have availed themselves of the opportunity to subscribe to THE COUNTRYMAN for life have, of course, deducted from their Life Subscription any sum standing to their credit in respect of an unexpired yearly subscription.

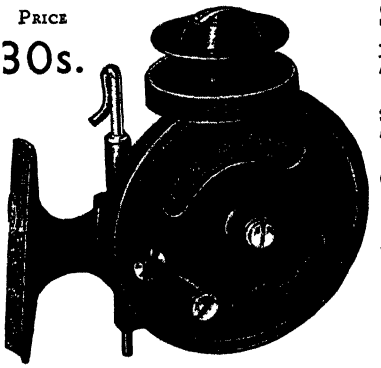
The conductor of a periodical like THE COUNTRYMAN, bought chiefly by subscription, has a great advantage in conducting it. He knows who his readers are. It is my belief that this Life Subscription economy will bring me into still closer contact with men and women in keen sympathy with the aims and the character of the review. – J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT

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WORLD-FAMOUS 'HERCULES' CASTS

Concerning Worms

by Salfario

I WILL now dare to say some good things concerning worms. You will know that among anglers of the South, at least those who angle for trout, this needs more than ordinary courage. They consider a man who will take a trout with worm a very common fellow and no angler. I do not blame them for this; it is because they know no better. I caught my first trout with this humble lure. A worm did me a service and I am grateful for it. As a boy I knew no other way of catching trout, for I was never good at tickling them! I regret this because tickling is a very fine art. Eventually all other ways and means gave up their secrets to me. Worms were forgotten and in fact despised. I sneered at them and wrote at them and sneeringly at that. There came a time when I was crossed in love. This sorry happening did not turn my mind to drink or suicide, but, in my bitterness, I determined to commit some dreadful deed. I packed my traps, hid myself on a border stream, and—fished worm for trout. To my mind, then, there was nothing more debased than this. It was delightful June, the stream was very low and clear. Thus, in my misery, I learnt the sport, the art, of luring trout with worm in clear water. Easy, unsporting, unskilful? Try it for yourself and you will find it none of these! You must fish fine and you must fish far. It is easier to cast a fly than to cast a worm. It is difficult to hook a trout to worm in swiftly running water. More difficult than to convert a rise on any Southern dry fly stream. Northern trout are as shy as Southern trout, and Northern streams provide but little cover. That is why you need to wade up stream casting far and often; uneasy, difficult and tiring work scattered with thrills and disappointments. You will miss as many runs with worm as you miss rises to your fly. Very likely when you come in on an evening, tired and with two trout to show for all your labours, a

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ULTRA MODERN

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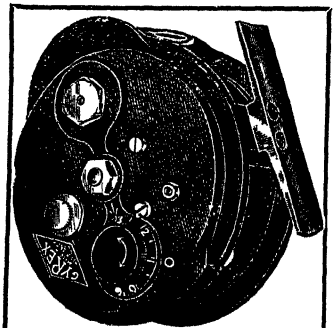
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local will come in triumphant, with twelve, or maybe twenty. Thus making it very clear to you that he has mastered this cunning art whereas you are still learning it. Nature is kind to the angler in providing this other way of taking trout, for it is best practised when the stone fly is finished and June and July have brought their sunny skies. You may very well stop as soon as August duns appear. The man who says that all worms are alike has no discernment. A trout will choose a worm as any lady does a peach. Find an old and ripe manure heap by some cow byre, if you can, and maybe you will be fortunate in finding brandlings there. Scour them in moss for at least a day. That will clean and toughen them. Then you will have a bait no trout can very well refuse provided he does not see you when you offer it.

Beechen Copse Books

BEECHEN Copse, Kingswood, Surrey, is the unusual postal address of the William Heinemann publishing headquarters. Their Windmill Press, with a capacity in the neighbourhood of 8,000 bound books a day, is in its fourth year. With its courtyard, fountain and formal garden merging into bluebell rides, the Press resembles a Georgian mansion rather than printing works. It is pleasant to think that John Masefield, John Galsworthy, George Moore, H. M. Tomlinson and J. B. Priestley are printed, bound and published in the country. The smoke problem has been avoided by the installation of Diesel engines which furnish electric power and light. The Windmill Press was to some extent modelled on the Country Life Press – in Long Island – the headquarters of Heinemann's associated company in America. This was founded as early as 1910 by Mr. F. N. Doubleday. This Country Life Press was dismissed at its inception as fantastic and uneconomic, publishing being considered to be the one business that must be conducted in the centre of a city.

IMPORTANT ADDITIONS TO..

The Connoisseur's Catalogue

Nearly three hundred new titles have been added to 'His Master's Voice' Connoisseur's Catalogue. None of these records has been hitherto issued in this country, and such works are included as Berlioz' 'La Damnation de Faust,' Schumann's 'Dichterliebe' and Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 3 in D minor.

The first edition of this Catalogue, published last autumn, was received by music critics as epochal in the history of the gramophone, and the second edition is of at least equal importance by virtue of the new titles alone.

All of the records are standard 'His Master's Voice' quality at standard prices, and a limited number of Catalogues is now available. Copies can be obtained from The Gramophone Co., Ltd., 367 Oxford Street, W. 1.



HIS MASTER'S VOICE

The Countryman's Wireless and Gramophone

DURING a bad thunderstorm we had the remarkable experience in my village of having no fewer than three radio instruments struck by lightning. Although my Philips' lightning arrestor was smashed completely, it saved the whole of my apparatus and prevented what might have been a nasty fire, so it is only fair to give it full marks. It is absolutely necessary, in order to get good radio results, that the aerial should be well insulated at either end. For this reason: there is no alternative path for lightning to take to the earth except through the radio instrument or its associated wiring, unless some kind of lightning arrestor or switch is fitted. The other day I was calling on some relatives and they proudly showed me their lightning switch—in the middle of the wall with the earth to a gas pipe in the next room! So many people seem to think that, provided you have a switch and an earth, all will be well. It does not occur to them that to have the earth and switch in the one place where you do not want the lightning is not a good plan. Let us have a few Dont's. Don't earth a lightning switch to an inside earth, especially the gas pipe. Don't forget, especially in the summer, to switch off your aerial at night. Don't hesitate, if a really severe storm is in progress, to drop the far end of your aerial to the ground by means of the pulley and cord. A little trouble may save you a good deal. Don't think that a Radio Instrument is dangerous from a lightning point of view if it is properly installed, because it is not. Always provide a complete outside path to an outside earthing point for your lightning switch, whether or not you find an interior earth better for reception. Always have your lightning switch outside the window, covered by some shield from the weather. Always entirely disconnect the aerial from your room, when a storm is impending, if you are in a flat or other premises which prevent your using



A Portable Pool in your garden

Swimming and diving on your own lawn! Hours of pleasure and healthy exercise in the sun for grown-ups and children alike. This is what a Sportapool means.

Sportapools are made in various sizes from 6 ft. 6 ins. to 24 ft. diameter (the one illustrated is 15 ft.). They have no rigid structure but erect themselves as they fill, and can be easily emptied and carried by hand or car from place to place. Prices £4 to £54. Full particulars from Sportapools Ltd., 34 Oxford St., London, W.1. (Museum 2458)

an outside earth. Some people who ordinarily have an outside aerial, switch over to an inside one when lightning or thunder is about, taking care to earth the outside aerial to an outside earth. There is some sacrifice of volume and range, but it makes it possible to continue listening – provided that you like to hear the crackle of the lightning discharges in your loudspeaker.

This year there will be at Olympia (Aug. 19-26) a radio-gramophone giving excellent quality, range and volume at a reasonable price and operated entirely from batteries – good news for country folk.

I have been struck by the growing popularity of the new Radio-Normandy Station, operated on about 200 metres, which provides a relief from the more severe type of Sunday programme. Make sure that a new instrument will tune down to 200 metres.

There are gramophone developments which we may hope to see possibly in eighteen months or so. Intensive work is being done on records which will play sometimes up to twenty minutes on end, and on records which are capable of a higher grade of reproduction than anything yet marketed. There are at present practically no machines which could play these new high quality records. Therefore innovations in the manufacture of records wait upon machines being available in sufficient quantities.

The Brown microbox – the name of S. G. Brown needs no introduction – makes it possible to reproduce gramophone records electrically through a loudspeaker without the use of amplifiers of any kind. The needle in the sound box is attached to a special form of microphone similar to that into which we speak on the telephone. All that is necessary is an accumulator and a loudspeaker. – Z.

Ø

WHEN the English folk dancers went to Holland and visited 'S Hertogenbosch eight or nine English folk dance tunes were played from the Roman Catholic Cathedral belfry.



Hiding Dampness

YOU may put dampness out of sight, for a while, by boarding or other temporary coverings, but the decay of the boarding involves expensive renewals. Plaster the surface of the wall with a mixture of sand and cement, waterproofed with 'PUDLO' Brand powder, and you will forget that it has ever been damp.

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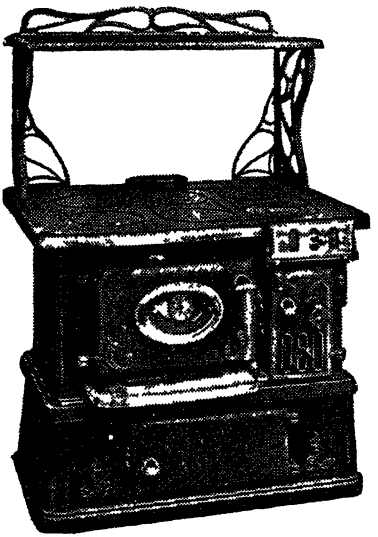
Letters of a Candid Architect

3. *Water and Drainage*

HAVING obtained an analysis of the water, and having been assured of the strength of the stream supplying your well, you can complete the purchase of your site, on which you have probably paid a deposit, promising to pay the balance when water is found to be satisfactory in quality and quantity. The next point is drainage. The position of your proposed house has guided you to decide the most convenient spot on the line of watercourse for your well. This should be at a level higher than the area in which you are going to dispose of your drainage. It is important that the area which is to take the effluent from the disposal system should not be on the line of the watercourse which your dowser has marked for you. If it were placed on this stream at a higher level it would pollute your well; if at a lower level it would possibly pollute someone else's. If you have pierced clay to reach water – now do not say this is impossible – you are fairly safe wherever your drainage may be. There are three systems. (1) Build a tank, usually circular, which must be emptied when necessary. The tank must be watertight and the sewage must not percolate into the ground direct. (2) Build a tank specially constructed to induce septic action, the effluent to be allowed to percolate into the ground. (3) Instal a proprietary plant devised by engineers, who by calculation and suitable treatment contrive to persuade a certain area of land to deal with a definite quantity of sewage. In all cases which are difficult through restrictions of site, nature of subsoil, or purpose of building this is the course to adopt. The first and second proposals are usually employed for smaller and normal country houses on a pervious subsoil. A watertight tank or cesspit should be built in brick or concrete on a concrete base. Cement mortar should be used for the bricks and the 9 inch thickness should be made with two 4½ inch walls, the bed joints of which do

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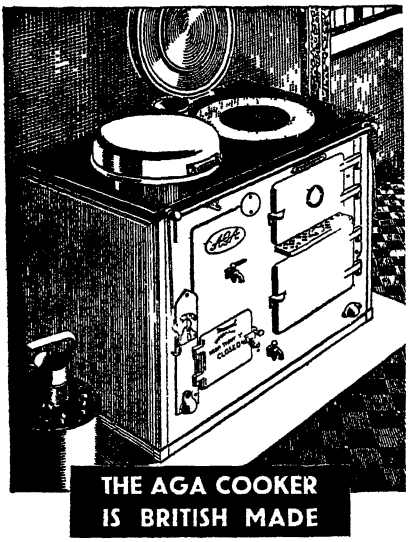
Showrooms in London, Liverpool, Edinburgh & Glasgow

not agree. The tank should be rendered and pudloed, and covered with a concrete slab with access for emptying. The theory of a septic tank is that sewage confined in a small space separates itself into three divisions: the bulk is liquid on which the light solids float; the heavy solids (a small quantity) sink to the bottom. The sewage discharges into the middle of the tank so that the top is undisturbed and is added to from below. As decomposition takes place, microbic action reduces the solids to an innocuous liquid. The outlet is contrived at a level which will enable it to flow out without creating disturbance. This liquid is passed through a mass of clinker and is taken to soak away into a blind well or distributed as near the surface as possible. The more concentrated the sewage the more efficient will the septic system be. It is preferable, therefore, to construct a dual system of drains, one to carry crude sewage to the tank, the other to take baths and sinks direct to the soakaway without entering the tank and causing dilution. This liquid discharge from baths and sinks always contains soap, soda, etc., which is anti-septic and discourages septic activities. Where all wastes go to the tank, disinfectant should not be used or your septic tank will be converted into a cesspool. If the sink waste is taken to the soakaway, full use should be made of a grease-trap, so that solid matter is not deposited on the walls of your soakaway. Neglect of this precaution has been known to render the soakaway watertight. Do not let anxiety about drainage cause you to give up a site which otherwise suits you. Water supply, however, is fundamental, and is a problem which you must solve before your decision in favour of the site is made.

'NO 'phone, no wireless, no car, no aeroplane,' appears on a subscriber's letter-paper.

'THEE'S T not fall down in a hunderd years,' an old time country mason was recently heard to say as he finished his job.

Men Women & Cooks



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Men like the Aga because it is so very, very economical. 25 cwt. of coke or anthracite a year is all it consumes burning day and night. Compare that cost (less than £4) with your present fuel account.

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Rural Authors—22. *Arthur Young*

IF ever there was an observant-looking man it is the man who looks out of a famous miniature of Arthur Young, 'that wise and honest traveller', as John Morley called him. He looks not only observant but forceful and kindly. Therefore we want to know more about him than he reveals in his remarkable 'Travels'. THE COUNTRYMAN has a special relation with Young not only because of the wide humanity of his rural outlook but because we happened to hit upon exactly the same size of page as that of his famous 'Annals', the 'Annals' to which George III contributed – see 'Mr. Ducket's Mode' in our issue of January, 1928 – Farmer George who said to his editor, 'Mr. Young, I consider myself as more obliged to you than to any other man in my dominions'. On the chance that some readers who know the 'Travels' in France and at home, and have also dipped into the 'Annals', do not know the 'Autobiography' we are going to make a few extracts, quoting from the volume prepared by Miss Betham-Edwards (Smith, Elder, 1898) from 'seven packets of MS. and twelve folio volumes of correspondence'. In our days it is curious to find Miss Betham-Edwards thinking Young's memoirs 'erring, if at all, on the side of outspokenness'. More in tune with our times is her note that, though there was 'never an Englishman more truly English, never was Englishman less narrow in his social sympathies', as is shown by his 'affectionate relations with Frenchmen, Poles, Russians, Danes, Italians and Scandinavians'. Young's life, as she goes on to say, was 'singularly interesting and singularly sad'. At one moment 'the untiring experimentalist and dreamer of economic dreams', at another 'the brilliant man of society and the world', at the end 'the blind, solitary victim of religious melancholia'. 'That lively, charming, spirited Mr. Young' is what Fanny Burney calls him. He could speak of his ancestral property as 'just maintaining the

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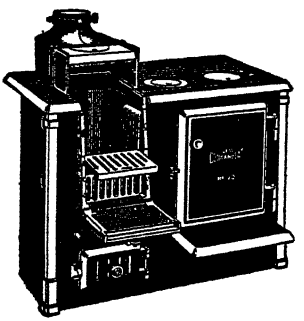
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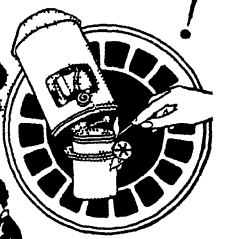
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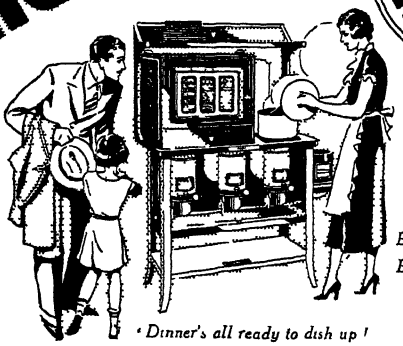
establishment of a wheelbarrow'. What he dubbed his 'literary follies' he began at school, with the compilation of a history of England! It was a far away time that, when beef was 3*d.* a pound. Young knew very well the value of the work he had done for agriculture. 'It has been very justly said', he writes, 'that I first excited the agricultural spirit which has rendered Britain so famous.' He was an indomitable penman, once covering 'a quire of foolscap in one day'. As to his trials as a farmer, early in his married life he wrote, 'I had infinitely rather live in a cottage upon bread and cheese than drag an anxious existence'. From his Samford Hall farm he moved to a farm at North Mimms. But, once more, trouble. 'What a year of incessant activity, composition, anxiety and wretchedness; no carthorse laboured as I did, spending like an idiot, always in debt, in spite of what I earned [£1167] with the sweat of my brow and almost my heart's blood.' Writing in 1770 of his three Tours (the years of Young's life were 1741-1820, as against Cobbett's 1762-1835) he claimed that the authors of all tours that had preceded his 'confined their attention absolutely to farms and seats, without paying any more thought to agriculture than if that art had no existence'. In 1772 Fanny Burney reports Young as 'almost destitute'. In that year, like Robert Burns (1759-1796) he had, as he wrote, 'thoughts of quitting the kingdom and going to America'. In 1783, he had the farm at Bradfield, left him by his aunt. On the matter of his personal habits, he notes that he was 'a desperate bather, going into the water every morning at four o'clock each winter, with or without the obstruction of a thick coat of ice'. A determined man: did he not work through the MS. of his travels in France again and again until he had reduced it by one-half? 'The work is certainly improved by this means and I am strongly of opinion if nine-tenths of other writers' – some of the people who send MSS. to THE COUNTRYMAN, for instance – 'were to do the same thing their performances would be much better'. In

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DA 157

1796 (aged 55) he meets Burke. 'Why, Mr. Young', said the orator, 'you look as young as you did sixteen years ago. You must be very strong; you have no belly; your form shows lightness; you have an elastic mind.' He fought on and on for rural life. The last words of his diary were of 'farms abandoned and lying absolutely waste'. Let us take leave of this good man by the grave of his little daughter – 'I buried her in my pew, fixing the coffin so that when I kneel it will be between her head and her dear heart' – before he himself departs, blind and, like Cowper (1731-1800) in dread of his God.

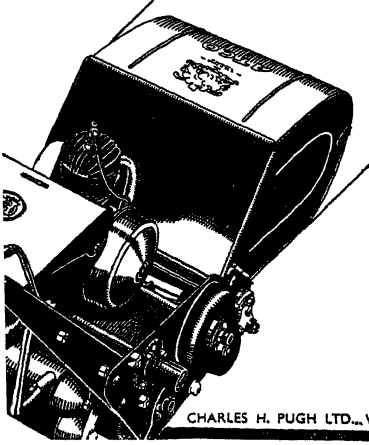
The Collector – 14. *Pictures Old and New*

DEVELOP a taste for a fine painting rather than for something which is attributed to this or that master. Two years ago a collector chanced upon an Andrea del Sarto. Another collector chanced upon a portrait by Hogarth, in its original frame, which he secured for ten pounds. Two paintings of fox hunting by Francis Sartorius were picked up for six pounds, their actual value being nearer six hundred guineas. A portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds by Northcote, a fine Van Huysum and a painting by Claude fell to the net of another intelligent collector. The large paintings produced by Opie, of the size of 'Troilus and Cressida' in the National Gallery, are sometimes found at country sales. An eye may be kept open for the cattle paintings of Garrard who awaits recognition as a genius. It was in a small shop in Norwich that the writer found a Morland. In these times when the markets are sluggish there is a great chance for the man or woman of limited means. An amateur may be lucky enough to find the missing Vermeer which is known to be in England. Only this year a collector acquired a fine painting by Louis le Nain, and this during the exhibition of French pictures at the Academy!

Whose garden is it?
...yours or your man's?

When your man is gardening he is earning his money. When he is cutting grass, he is not—for what you may be paying him 3/- for an Atco could do for 1/2½—and do better. Your garden belongs to you, and most of the money you are paying to have its grass cut ought to be going into your pocket—no one else's.

Write for illustrated folder giving particulars of the Atco range—10 models—including the new Atco De Luxe—sizes from 12 to 36 ins—all backed by the Atco Service Organisation



THE NEW ATCO ALL BRITISH MOTOR MOWER DE LUXE

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The Garden and Orchard

VANISHED Roses. I was looking through one of the best of the nurserymen's catalogues the other day, and in a description of a particular form of a quite common plant these words caught my eye: 'Far and away the best form, flowers deep rich crimson, seldom out of flower . . . Discovered by us in a cottage garden.' And as I read that my mind went back over the years, and I remembered once more a plant which I too have always thought was 'far and away the best form', with flowers deep crimson, that grew in the garden of the house where I was born. It was a rose, the only rose of its kind that I have ever known, and a rose which I have looked for in other places ever since and have never found. In those far-off days it was just called a' China rose, and because I admired it I was given it for my own, to grow, of course, where it was, against an old brick wall. It was a rose with slender branches, very thin stalks to the flowers, which were small, double, deep crimson and of a sweetness which to-day seems to me, who have not smelt the blossom for nearly a life-time, to surpass any other rose or indeed any other flower. That old house, and the roses in its garden have long vanished. I have looked in many gardens since, and have written to rose growers often, but I cannot hear of another plant. I would give much to be able to find one, and when I read that sentence in the nurseryman's catalogue the other day, hope sprang up once more. The rose I want may not be in the rosegrowers' catalogues, it may have been improved by them out of existence; but still it may be growing in some corner of England, to be 'discovered in a cottage garden'. – *P.Q.*

REALLY Fresh Vegetables. In THE COUNTRYMAN correspondents have often stressed the facility for obtaining fresh vegetables as one of the attractions of rural life. There is, therefore, no need for me to emphasize this fact. But I should like to put a finer point on it. I often find that

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vegetables are gathered when it suits the gardener rather than at the cook's desire. There are, however, many vegetables which when gathered just before they are cooked show a marked improvement in flavour. Peas and asparagus are notable examples and should not be gathered in the morning for the evening meal. Asparagus cut immediately before cooking will be a revelation to many. For peas I plead for cooking in a cabbage leaf rather than boiling. Young carrots fresh from the soil have a mellowness which long gathered examples cannot show, and how few gardeners produce young carrots the size of radishes all the summer through! They should be sown fortnightly and in August a large sowing for winter use as they keep quite well in the soil until required in most winters; a littering of straw or leaves will preserve them during a very hard frost. The carrot a century ago was regarded as a cure for many ills and now we learn that it has valuable properties undreamed of, so a constant supply should be provided. All vegetables are best cooked alive; even winter greens which so often flag in the vegetable rack for days. – *E.A.B.*

'*THE Purest of Human Pleasures*'? A June evening and rosy triangular Mrs. Best stooping in her rainbowed garden that slopes south-west from the neat white and brown cottage. Ponderous, town-thinking Miss Viner, her hand on the low oak gate from which runs the box-skirted path, has called as secretary of the women's institute to remind Mrs. Best that a newcomer is to be given a plant from each member's garden. 'Mrs. Best, your garden is marvellous; really marvellous those larkspurs and lilies, and such a glory of colour those roses. Every month, almost every week, you get a new mosaic. Your garden reminds me of the great Lord Bacon's words about "the purest of human pleasures"'. Mrs. Best's hands are full of snails destined for a pail of salted water. 'Pleasure! did ye say? There's naught on earth raises more ill-feelin' than gardens. There's them that

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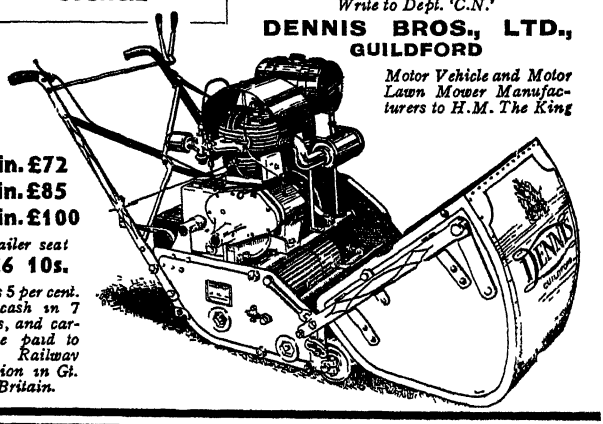
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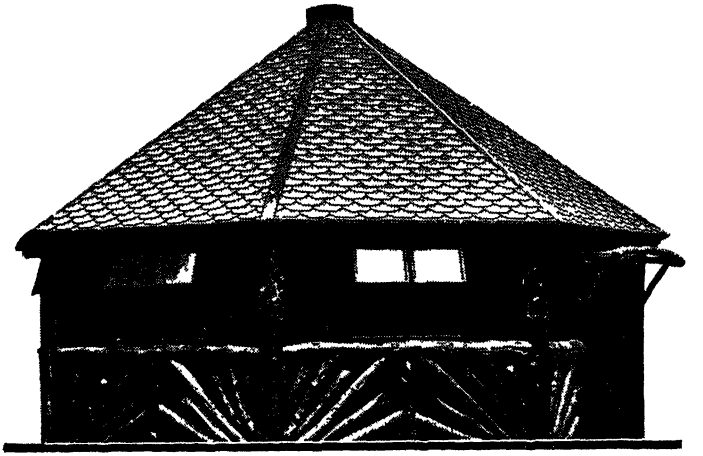
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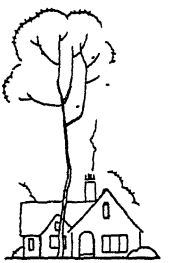
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envies you, an' them that grudges you, an' them that never stops askin', askin'. There's slugs, and there's dandy fluff from the farm, and birds and beetles an' them nesty little bees anockerlatin' everythin'. 'Tis more like a complaint than a pleasure, for I can't keep out o'nt. I'm at it every day except its rainin', and night time I'm dreamin' and plannin'.' 'Really! And I always say as I pass, "There's Mrs. Best in her paradise – if one may speak of paradise without an Adam".' 'Well, Miss, if 'tis paradise, 'tis because there ain't no Adam. My Ben were as good an 'usband as ever lived married and 'appy for thirty years, but the only hot quarrels we ever had were about this little bit of a garden. My Ben he mortally hated flowers 'cept wild ones. He begrudged me every penny packet of flower seed. Yet he were a good man as men is. What my Ben loved was onions. He fought me over that till I gave in and let him have a corner right there. For peace sake to my silly conscience now he's gone, I allus grows one onion and lets it seed. There it is, that tall thing with the creamy head. It puzzles many a one – almost pretty if ye didn't know. Ben said he didn't mind a rose nor yet a pansy, but, for the rest, flowers was just vanity and women's truck. A bunch of flowers in a jug set him wild. Withal, at the last, I laid a lovely wreath on his breast. Ye'd 'av thought he were smilin', thinkin' I must have my joke, an' the last word about the garden.' Miss Viner, slightly shocked: 'But did not your husband love the sweet smells, Mrs. Best?' 'Ben didn't 'ave no smell, Miss, an' he liked the look of well-set cabbages or a row o' peas better than wallflowers. But I tell you, Miss, there's many quarrels about their gardens besides Ben and me. There's the Honourable Missy now – our President – she keeps fower men but she gets in a regular sweat if there's visitors comin' and no right colour in the garden. I know the feelin'. My Ben once brought me a packet of asperoola seeds for my birthday. He'd heard 'twas a lovely blue flower. I sowed it and watered it and watched it and left a big patch

The Countryman's Garden Roofs





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near my yalla prathrums. It come up the ugliest, measliest thing you ever saw, so one day I tore it all up in a rage. Ben *was* riled. What were the gentleman's words about gardens, Miss?' ' "The purest of human pleasures", Mrs. Best.' 'Did you ever, and if it don't raise the devil wi' greed and covetousness. There's them that has gardens for pride's sake and showin' off, and some wants the whole earth and counts their very seeds. Tell the new member to bring a barra' an' I'll fill it wi' all sorts come autumn. "Purest of human pleasures"!' Mrs. Best paused and handed Miss Viner a huge bunch of flowers that she had been gathering. 'One minute, Miss,' as Miss Viner thanked her and turned to leave. Mrs. Best leant an arm on the gate saying: 'A garden's company right enough. 'Tis all pleasure when you're plannin'; 'tis pleasure while you're diggin'. Weedin' is regular satisfyin', and sowin' the seeds is excitin' if anxious. 'Tis great pleasure when the things come through. I can hardly wait. 'Tis pleasure gettin' a new plant from a neighbour and best of all 'tis pleasure to give. "Givin's gettin' ", as they do say. Why, Miss, I believe your Mr. Pork is right.' 'Mr. Pork!' said Miss Viner indignantly; 'I said, Lord Bacon.' 'Oh yes, "Bacon", so you did. Well Miss, you tell him that come to think on't he's right. I do say for real pleasure there's naught can beat gardenin'.'—*Elspet Keith*

BE Resolute in Thinning. A great show of fruit blossom as I write and a late flowering season leads us to hope for a good fruit crop, and once again I would emphasize the need for severe thinning should there be a plentiful set of fruit. Nothing is more trying to a tree than over-cropping; its resources are over-strained and the next year's crop often imperilled. With careful regulation a moderate crop can be obtained annually, so in thinning this year we are helping the tree to prepare fruit buds for next year. Plums, apples and pears will not have their normal flavour if over-cropped.



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In June, therefore, regulate the fruits. In July a final thinning should leave apples and pears six inches apart. Never leave two apples on one spur: earwigs will live between them and damage both. Pears of the earlier kinds will not suffer so much. Take away malformed or spotted fruit and give preference to fruits best exposed to the sun. As August comes in, snip off any leaves which shade the fruit as every apple or pear must have exposure to the sunlight if it is to become well-coloured and thus well-ripened. – *E.A.B.*

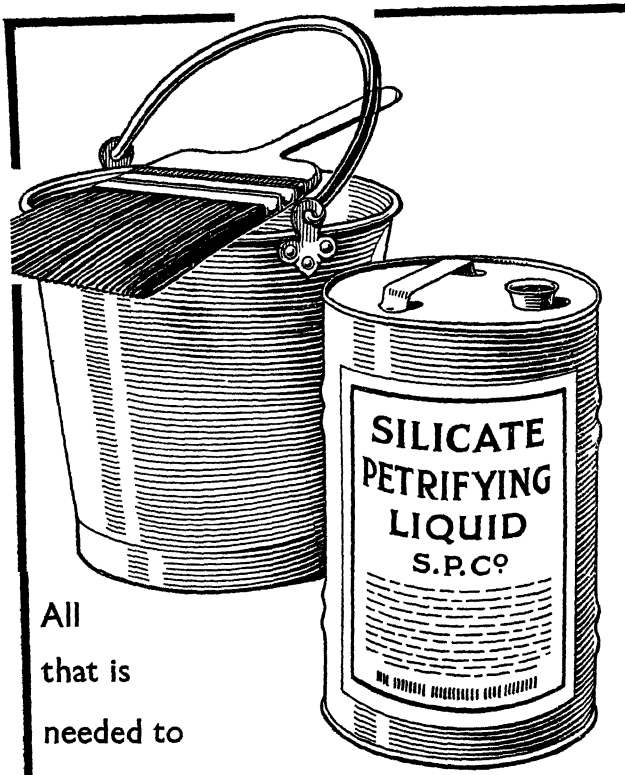
I learn from a friend from Canada that a Canadian fruit experimental station has found that if the blossom on one branch only is thinned, that branch will crop next year while the rest of the tree may not. – *H.C.*

The Books They Used to Read

THE members of the Haystead Book Society, which was started in the winter of 1805 by a handful of farmers and their minister, agreed to meet 'on or before a full moon', for discussion, and to pass round books. During the early sessions the following volumes were circulated, and it seems not inappropriate that the Finsbury bookseller who supplied them had his shop in Paradise Strect, Tabernacle Walk:

Solitude Sweetened
Memoirs of a Pious Woman
Smith's System of Prayer
Owen's Fashionable World
Hints on Self-Defence
Bunyan's Heart's Ease
Burden's Lawful Amusements
Fuller's Backslider
Berridge's Cheerful Piety
Bennet's Sermon on the Duties of the Closet
A Week's Conversation between a Lady and her Nieces
Palmer's Warning to Professors
Adam's Private Thoughts
Christian's Looking Glass
Memoirs of a Female Vagrant
Ryland's Extraordinary Impulses

The annual meeting took place at the Sun Inn, where a 'plain dinner for a quarter before one' was ordered for the company. The ordinary meetings were held at members' houses in turn. The houses were so far apart that for some members a long drive in an open trap, or a ride on horseback –



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wife behind on pillion – was necessary. Ten years after the foundation of the Society the books chosen included:

The Female Pilgrim (apparently unrelated to the Vagrant)
Interesting Conversation by a Lady
Budd's Picture of the Condemned Cell
The Secret Thoughts of a Christian Lady Lately Departed (not, let us hope, by way of the condemned cell)

The first woman member was admitted in 1810. Simultaneously, a book of light verse was ordered. But this departure was atoned for by 'The Young Man's Morning and Evening Portion'. The 'Portion' was not however, satisfying meat for every young man, for there is a note to 'order Lord Byron's Life if not more than a Guinea'. From that time all the best popular biographies were bought. In 1830 the yearly dinner at the inn was abolished and the annual meeting took place at a member's house, with the convivial addition of six bottles of port wine, purchased out of funds. This custom gave way, in more recent times, to tea, and sank at last into the chilly hospitality of 'refreshments'. Cobbett's 'Legacy to the Parsons' was bought in 1835, the date at which magazines were first admitted. Rather inexplicably in an inland village, the 'Sailor's Magazine' was popular. So was the 'House Mistress'. There was still a relish for such works as 'The Pearl of Days' by A Labourer's Daughter, 'The First Prize of a Labouring Man' and 'Lessons for Young People in Humble Life'. One wonders about 'Marriage by a Socialist' (1845). In the 'fifties a new clause was added to the rules, 'Anyone not present, unless through the illness or attendance at the Funeral of a First Cousin Inclusive, to forfeit 6*d*'. In 1855 Dickens' 'Household Words' appeared in monthly parts and the Society ordered the first numbers; but, for reasons not stated, discontinued taking in that publication. The children's books chiefly recorded the deathbed conversions of young people. Samuel Smiles was circulated in 1878 and the ban on political subjects was removed in 1880. After the Society had met for the 421st time it was put on a more 'public basis'.

Drytone Woodwork



When the Architectural Association decided to exhibit a suite of rooms at the Ideal Home Exhibition this year Drytone Woodwork was selected for the chimney piece and panelling for the sitting room designed by the President, Mr. Knapp-Fisher, F.R.I.B.A. The material chosen was Indian White Mahogany finished by the Drytone Process to a warm grey tone which formed a perfect background for the general scheme of furnishing. The architect himself says:

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The Trend of Agricultural Thinking

by A Student

ALL that THE COUNTRYMAN need say in connection with the Ottawa Conference was said a year or two ago by Sir Daniel Hall, 'The Empire, considered as a whole, is dependent on agriculture'.

A FARMER who keeps his own plane told me two interesting things. (1) He recently flew over to visit friends and saw from the air that their wheat had been manured very irregularly. When he told them they did not believe him, so he took them up, when they saw for themselves. (2) He also said he could tell from the air whether a field was tractor or horse-planted and harrowed, not so much by the presence of tractor wheel marks as by a definitely different look in the horse-cultivated fields which he put down to the hoof marks.

IN 1932, there were nine combine-owners. Of these, five belonged to the landlord class, two had 'gone into farming', and two were hereditary farmers – or rather one was a farmer and the other a ploughing contractor. This year over fifteen combines have been sold already, most of them to new owners of the hereditary farmer class.

DURING a recent trip round a number of mechanized farms I particularly noticed the smiling faces of the men working the tractors and the big implements pulled after them. All were obviously keenly interested and enjoying themselves. Perhaps the novelty had something to do with it, but there it was.

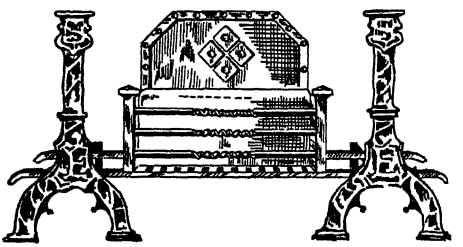
THE rainfall in the three harvest months in the Argentine in 1929-30 was eight inches, which was nearly a low record; in the same three months in 1930-31 it was thirty-one inches – probably the wettest harvest the Argentine has had. These records come from an estancia in the Santa Fé province. The figures will surprise those

FLAVELS
of LEAMINGTON

STOVE MAKERS SINCE 1777

knowing that the charm of the Countryside is so ably seconded by the cheer of the fireside renew their invitation to all Countrymen to make the occasion of their next visit to London the opportunity also for an inspection of the permanent fireplace exhibit at
38 Welbeck Street, W.1

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who think that England has a monopoly of wet weather at harvest time. So will the further information that combine harvesters were most successful and did relatively better in the wet than in the dry season.

OF fourteen beet sugar factories six are co-operative, and of twenty-seven potato-flour factories eighteen are co-operative. But that is in Holland.

'MECHANIZATION has its place on small farms', writes an experienced farmer to me; 'I have three engines and a tractor on 120 acres.'

'WHAT wonderful things could be done with the £6 millions that the Government is spending on its wheat policy', he continues. 'On the usual 8 per cent terms of agricultural improvement loans, this sum would meet in twenty years the capital and interest on a loan of £70 millions, ample to re-equip our whole arable area on the most up-to-date lines for mixed farming on farms of 100 to 300 acres, the type which is holding its own relatively well here and all over the world.'

MY old farm foreman has got a wireless set. A man from Birmingham came round with a motor-van and sold several in the district. He fits them up, starts them and calls once a fortnight to change the batteries, charging 4*d.* a time. (This seems cheap.) If this sort of thing spreads, what a revolution it will work in the villages! The only objection was from the foreman's wife. She said he would not come to bed but would sit up listening.

IN ten years from now Great Britain could produce 55 per cent of her total food requirements – instead of 38 per cent only, as at present – and thereby effect a saving in her foodstuffs bill of £100,000,000. This is the opinion expressed, with no end of data in support of it, in *Fertilisers and Food Production on Arable and Grass Land*, a purposelike little book just published by Sir Frederick Keeble, F.R.S. (Oxford

It's a happy home that has



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University Press, pp. 206, with tables, 5s.). As England can never hope to compete in the grain markets of the world, Sir Frederick recommends that we should place even greater reliance upon overseas supplies for our breadstuffs and give all our energies to raising, as cheaply as possible, the expensive protein foods – meat, butter, cheese and eggs. The soil should be devoted to raising food for livestock – as a supplementary ration to grass, the only complete food for stock, and the crop for which our climate has given us the advantage. Alas! there is much to be done – and we all know how much Imperial Chemical Industries is doing at Jealott's Hill – to develop the use of fertilisers. A Cambridge department of agriculture report has shown that on only one farm out of four in a certain county were any fertilisers used at all. 'After making full allowance for the different systems of farming, the fact remains that the Dutch farmer supplies his crops with nearly 25 per cent more nitrogen than does the British farmer; no wonder his crops are 25 per cent bigger!' Sir Frederick's estimates of the increases in production which may reasonably be expected from the combined use of fertilisers and modern methods are: cereals 19 per cent, potatoes 18 per cent, sugar beet 23 per cent, roots 7 per cent, hay 41 per cent. 'At present Great Britain is understocked by at least one-third of its potential total.' The incidental questions of water supply, housing and protection from disease are to be solved in the ten years of development. But the book must be read.

INDEX AND TITLEPAGE. *This is now ready, more detailed than previously;* 1s. *post free. Binding charges are stated on page* 541. *Readers with broken sets are again warned that very few copies remain of previous issues of* THE COUNTRYMAN. *We have evidence that bound volumes, containing as they do a vivid impression of country life, are likely to increase in value. Several bound sets we have supplied have gone to America.*

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Country Books of the Quarter

A GUIDE TO THE BEST READING

THE Life of Rural Britain. – A rural writer may be praised for knowledge, for imagination, for sympathy, for simplicity, for humour and for clarity. All these are fine things. But there is one other, a humble and contrite spirit. And this is the thought of the appreciative reader of Henry Williamson, who, with travail, has come to write so surely about streams and their denizens, about wild life and about the country men and women of Devon. In his masterly new book, a large book, *The Labouring Life* (Cape, pp. 491, 7*s.* 6*d.*) he not only displays his remarkable range, but, in his candid way, marks the stages of his advance. 'While writing *The Village Book* it seemed that property was the root of all evil, but there has been time for reflection. The problem is one of narrowness of interest. Newspapers, wireless, motor buses, higher wages, which mean better dwellings, better food and clothes (especially raincoats), all these are tending to remove, for the time being, the greatest enemy of mankind – fear.' Another note on fundamentals is: 'These village people are kind in many of their human actions – the kindliness being impulsive – but are spiritually stunted. All the bad things of the village are caused by this. Sunday sermons, when reckoned good, are usually stimulations to perceive the beam in your neighbour's eye.' There is a characteristic passage about river life: 'A trout has its regular runs and hides in water just as a rabbit has on land, and the otter knows this. A scared trout pressed into a hole or hover, worn by floods in the banks, under rocks and behind the washed roots of trees, is like a rabbit; there it remains easy to take. Much of the so-called "tickling" of a trout is merely the act of lifting out a fish limp with fright.' As to wild birds and animals, he speaks of 'a hardened old hunter' who confessed that they were 'pure and heavenly



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and incapable of meanness'. For the voice of a human 'character', we may listen to one who having had her clothes washed and rinsed but not yet bleached by the sun, said, 'They'm water-sweet, if not lily-whit (lily-white).' Briefly, a book in the first class. – *Wold without End* by H. J. Massingham (Cobden-Sanderson, pp. 304, illus., 10*s.* 6*d.*) is a robust and beautiful book by an author whose country books are all outstanding, the book of a man who can both live urgently and withdraw from the urgency of life. It is a book of the Cotswolds and it contains an invaluable appendix of Cotswold speech: 'The coins I have collected are without rust because they are yet in local being.' How many, alas! are already rusted past usefulness in our southern Cotswolds. Included in the book, in which there are many salty stories, is the article which appeared in our last issue. – 'What a gentle country', the remark of an American visitor to West Sussex, is quoted in J. C. Squire's introduction to Edmund Blunden's admirable *Face of England* in the English Heritage series (Longmans, pp. 178, 3*s.* 6*d.*) – forty short sketches and poems perfect in their kind. In his writing, as his editor says, 'every Englishman can find his own early village, inns, churches, flowers, birds' eggs, gipsies, woodland fires, streams, ponds, fish, cattle; having found beauty in common things, he never lost it again'. There are also fresh country anecdotes. 'With deference the horsekeeper proceeds, "I give it to you as it was given to me, they tell me there's people born and bred in London that can't find their way all about it."' – Books calculated to give shocks to believers in the good old times continue to reach us. The latest arrival is *The English Country Town* by Guy Parsloe (English Heritage series, Longmans, pp. 218, 3*s.* 6*d.*,) a painstaking and interesting piece of work. There is a recollection of bull-baiting at a date within the lifetime of some of our readers, 1866. 'The shrieking of the women mingled with the loud bellowings of the bull, the deep barkings of the dogs, the shoutings of the men, a miserable

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scene.' The common mill and the common oven, at which all corn had to be ground and all bread baked, were enforced at Morpeth as late as 1739. From the laws of the old corporations we have many picturesque extracts. At Rye and Hastings it used to be illegal to use nets 'in the night season, whereby the fysh, disquieted and wanting naturall rest, doe become leane, unserviceable'. At Dover a man was rightly brought to punishment for selling 'olde rotten and nawghty chesse, consumed by myutes, to evell to be expressed'. – It is not possible to praise too highly *The Changing Face of England* by the late Anthony Collett, now reprinted in the Travellers' Library (Cape, pp. 256, 3*s.* 6*d.*). The mass of information so charmingly brought together is amazing. A book for every village! How many of us realize that England is growing larger? How many that 'if St. Paul's was planted anywhere between the Dutch and English coasts the golden cross would shine above water'? – *The Country Gentleman* by Godfrey Locker Lampson (Cape, pp. 251, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is a series of chapters written with personal experience and zest, in which the landed gentry are seen as many of them see themselves. The author does not go very deep, and he is not much given to looking before or after; but the record he has made fills a place. – 'Is there any film record of the English countryside to show overseas?' Sir Stephen Tallents asks in *The Projection of England* (Faber and Faber, pp. 48, 1*s.*). We remember being consulted as to the best means of making one, but was it ever made? Every Briton who has been much abroad knows the difficulty of visualizing for foreign friends some of the most typical things in Britain. He will sympathize, therefore, with the plea made by the secretary of the Empire Marketing Board for a wise collection of our country's fine points. In these days even nations may intelligently advertise. Sir Stephen might have noted THE COUNTRYMAN'S repeated suggestion that there should be postage stamps illustrative of the scenic beauties and bird and animal life of these

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islands. – *The Roads of England* by R. M. C. Anderson, with a foreword by Sir William R. Morris, who has done so much to take his countrymen over them (Benn, pp. 254, illus., 8*s*. 6*d*.) is careful, original and readable. Every member of a roads and bridges committee does not remember that we owe our words 'highway' and 'high road' to the fact that Roman roads were ordinarily built six or seven feet above normal level. As to the incredible condition of the roads in post-Roman times, even in 1603 James I took five weeks on the journey from Edinburgh to London. It was said of the first coaches that 'the sight of them put both horse and man into amazement', while John Cresset (1673) asked 'what advantage is it to a Man's health to be called out of Bed into these Coaches, to be hurried by them from place to place, insomuch that, after sitting all day in the summertime stifled with heat and choaked with dust, or in the wintertime freezing with cold a man is often brought to Inns by torch-light when it is too late to get supper?' Did not Queen Elizabeth tell the French Ambassador that after a coach journey, even in London, she could not sit down for several days? Then, in MacAdam's phrase, 'the calamity of rail-ways fell upon us'! 'When once the novelty has subsided', the 'Sporting Magazine' was well assured, 'we shall seldom hear of a *gentleman* condescending to assume this hasty mode of transit, compatible only with mercantile travellers'. – Arthur H. Plaisted's imposing volume, *The Parsons and Parish Registers of Medmenham, Bucks* (Long-mans, pp. 497, many illus. and maps, 15*s*.) is modest, scholarly and racy. On family names he notes that, in his book alone, there are sixteen different spellings of Burridge. Before the eighteenth century it was uncommon for anyone to be baptized with two Christian names. Church baptismal registers are sometimes candid; for instance, '1738, Ann, daughter of William Edmonds and Ann his reputed wife'. In 15-year periods from 1575 to 1925 the average propor-tions of illegitimates to legitimates baptised in Medmenham

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decreased as follows: 200, 192, 69, 64, 29, 20 and 45. The custom of burial in wooden coffins 'started about 1600, but did not become general until many years afterwards'. – For half a century the author of *The Great Church Towers of England*, by Frank J. Allen, M.D. (Cambridge University Press, pp. 219, 52 plates and many illustrations in the text, 45*s*.) has made it his duty to preserve 'for the benefit of posterity' a record of the fine church towers of the country, and in this book the greatest care has been taken with blocks, with the right choice of papers and with printing to ensure permanency. The collection is extraordinarily interesting and valuable. Why are the northwest of England and the counties of Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex so deficient in important towers? Why is Somerset so rich in spireless towers? Why are the Northamptonshire spires so noteworthy? A treatise on the great towers has to give nearly half its pages to Somerset. The book will be a revelation to many. The author corrects a common error that the word belfry has in its origin anything to do with bells; a belfry is a watch tower. – *Minor Domestic Architecture of Gloucestershire* by A. T. Broadbent and A. Minoprio, the first volume in the 'Domestic Architecture of Old England' series (Tiranti, pp. 19, with several illustrations in the text and 48 plates, 21*s*.) is a joy. The editor of the series, Dexter Morland, utters a warning. We are not to think everything is safe because there are 133 societies having in view the preservation of rural and ancient England. – There is no criticism of *Highways and Byways in Gloucestershire* by Edward Hutton, with many illustrations by Hugh Thomson (Macmillan, pp. 486, 7*s*. 6*d*.) except to say that some readers might prefer to have a little more time spent in highways and byways and less in ecclesiastical buildings. – *Roman Britain* by R. G. Collingwood (Clarendon Press, pp. 170, 59 illus. and map, 6*s*.) has been almost re-written and is as fascinating as informing. Its chief success is in impressing on the reader's mind that there was no great gap between

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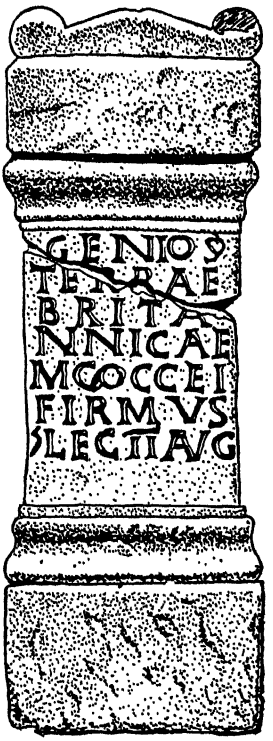
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author thinks that the adjective for a Tamworth pig is 'genteel' and mentions that the town of Stafford is on the Sow. – *The Glory of Scotland* by J. J. Bell, with a foreword by Compton Mackenzie (Harrap, pp. 386, many illus. and two excellent maps, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is a book of skill, wit and unending labour – a noble compression of 2,200 pages of MS. – alluring to the stranger to Scotland and the Scot. Among the stories is the reply to the patron of a Scottish inn who complained of prices being raised in the summer, 'We do not raise them in the summer; we lower them in the winter.' Another tale is that of a visitor to Lanark who bought at a second-hand dealer's a string of dark beads. Taken to a jeweller to be fitted with a clasp they were valued at £450, and when they were brought to London at £800. These black pearls which had been lost for a long time, had been worn by Mary Queen of Scots at Fotheringay on the morning of her execution. The executioner was a Lanark man. – *Wales*, by W. T. Palmer (Harrap, pp. 347, 7*s.* 6*d*, 'Kitbag Series') is by an old hand at writing about climbing and the lakes, who has 'travelled every main road and most of the secondary roads'. – *The Chilterns and the Thames Valley* by S. E. Winbolt, with 54 illustrations by Edgar Ward (Bell, pp. 314, 6*s.*, 'Bell's Pocket Guides') is the fifth Winbolt-Ward effort and excellent. – *Round England in an £8 Car*, by Terence Horsley (Ivor Nicholson and Watson, pp. 223, 6*s.*) is by the author of 'The Odyssey of an Out-of-Work'. – *London*, by H. G. Corner (Longmans, pp. 183, 3*s.* 6*d.*) in the English Heritage series is written with information and distinction. – With the publication of *Ireland*, edited by Findlay Muirhead (pp. 359, with a complete atlas and 13 maps and plans, 12*s.* 6*d.*) the 'Blue Guides', now published by Benn, cover the four kingdoms. It is described as and is 'an adequate guide-book'. – Speleology is cave-exploring, 'mountaineering reversed', and in *Caving* by Dr. Ernest A. Baker (Chapman and Hall, pp. 268, 112 illus., 15*s.*) there is an account, at once learned and enter-

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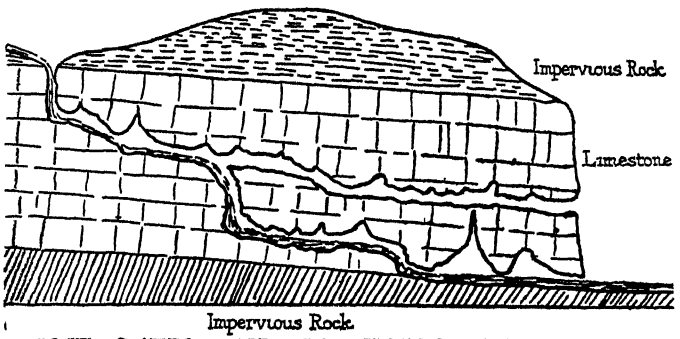
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taining, of speleologizing in this country and on the Continent. Most of us are surprised to find how full our own land is of caves. And the size of them is also surprising. The length of Desmond's Cave is 479 yards. 'Gaping Ghyll Hole drops 364 feet sheer into a chamber in which one of our larger cathedrals might be re-erected.' The accompanying



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illustration explains simply how most of our caves came into existence. It also suggests how damp they are; did not someone speak of the real danger of speleologists dying a 'sodden death'? There is a spring on an islet in the Bristol Channel which is said to be fed by rain falling in the Mendips. 'Where', asks the author, 'is the head of water that feeds the hot springs of Bath?' The flashlight photographs in the book are weird and awesome. For thirty years the author has been a haunter of caves and pot-holes. The experiences of his friends and himself have been arduous and strange. There is certainly no recreation calling for greater physical vigour.

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to us all. The chapters are in THE COUNTRYMAN tradition of brevity and terseness; even Nature lovers are busy people nowadays. Lord Grey, in a commendatory preface tells how when sleeping out on his lawn he woke up to find a thrush feeding a young one close to his face. From the chapter on British serpents the novice learns that adders because they may live chiefly on field-mice are among our benefactors, that when they have newly changed their skins, they may be brown, red or yellow, that it is imprudent to take up the harmless grass-snake for identification 'for it is likely to eject a truly skunk-like liquid', and that it swims 'with its head and yellow collar held formidably aloft'; but that the blind-worm is 'perfectly unobjectionable to handle – cool, dry and muscular, with an attitude of dignified protest that never degenerates into mere petulance, though now and then, mutely eloquent, he flashes out his tongue'. The 'Times' must certainly do it again. – *Why Birds Sing*, by Jacques Delamain (Gollancz, pp. 335, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is the result of a quarter of a century's study, and the book has been commended by Maeterlinck and crowned by the Academy. The author's study is bird civilization. It was the writing of Edmund Selous that caused his rifle and his taxidermy to be replaced by a field-glass. Indeed a dozen out of the twenty-one authorities he quotes are British. He is struck by the frequency with which a pair of birds is accompanied by a rejected suitor whom the happy couple do not always take the trouble to drive away. He is inclined to think that the nuptial combats of the males may be more ritualistic than severe. Some of his speculations and statements may not be new and some may not carry complete conviction, but he is a true bird-lover. – *Friends of Field and Forest, Feathered Friends of Stream and Shore* and *Feathered Friends of Field and Forest*, by Eleanor E. Helme, with 16 coloured plates and many line drawings (R.T.S., 2*s.* 6*d.*, about 120 pages each) are excellent children's books. – *Big Dogs and Little Dogs*, by Hedda Walker (Routledge, pp. 68, 3*s.* 6*d.*) con-

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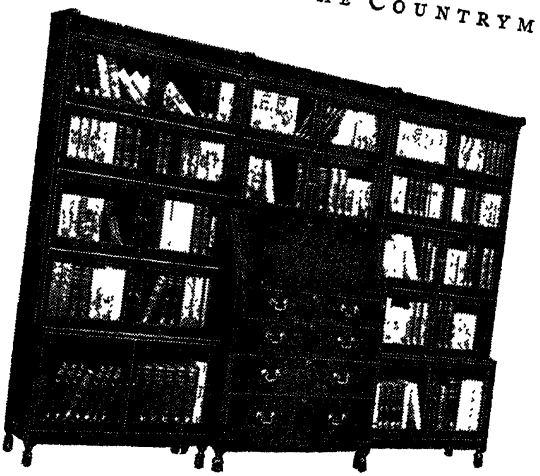
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fancy, but there are moods for: 'Maggie was a typical child of the Cotswolds, or Chilterns, as the case may be; thirteen, with red hair and a three-cornered slit in her pinafore and one stocking always half-way down. For three years she had taken first prize for rock cakes, dictation, running and felling and coloured raffia work.' In *Windfalls* Putnams give 246 pages for 2*s*. – Readers who can remember the time when they faced three-volume novels may revive their indomitable twenties by tackling *Devil's Tor* by David Lindsay (Putnam, pp. 487, 7*s*. 6*d*.), for there must be something like 195,000 words in its packed pages. (There are 364 words on this page.) Devil's Tor itself is in Devon but the narrative or discourse is not of a county but cosmic. THE COUNTRYMAN has to be content with the earth, so can speak only of the power and individuality of *Devil's Tor* with its Devon backcloth. – Readers who have so long relished the flavoursome dialect and determined naughtiness of S. L. Bensusan's Essex characters will be well satisfied with the novel in which he has given them elbow room, *A Child of Chance* (Cape, pp. 360, 7*s*. 6*d*.) – He or she who has never read J. Keighley Snowden's remarkable *Weaver's Web*, published more than a quarter of a century ago, and desires to savour the Yorkshire dialect and know the hard life of remote villages fifty years ago, should buy this new edition (Cape, pp. 255, 7*s*. 6*d*.) with its admirable preface by Lord Snowden, who knew 'Weasel', the poacher. Has any village equalled the 'Cragsides' record of sending three of its sons to Parliament within twenty years? – 'A farm: byres and pigsties and middens; clogs and aprons and bunched-up skirts' is a sentence from *Sorrowstones*, a story of the Lake country by W. R. Calvert (Putnam, 2*s*. 6*d*.) which has the atmosphere of the north. Readers who know the fells may differ on the quality of its psychology. – 'Florin Books' is the latest Jonathan Cape adventure in sound literature, with good type, opaque paper, and every volume opening easily. Three reprints are W. H. Davies' *Adventures*



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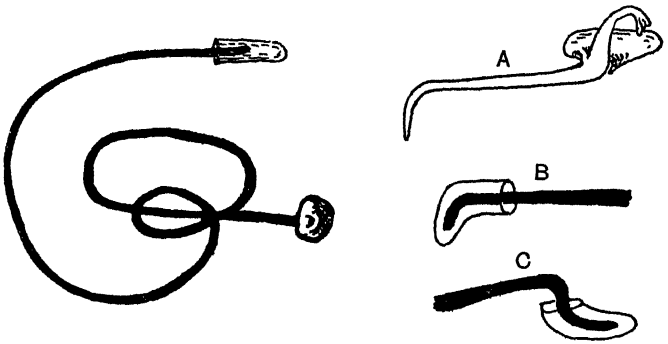
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The illustration on the left shows a slender seedling attached to the seed with its tip held horizontally in a glass tube; the bending of the seedling is the expression of futile efforts to bring the tip into the vertical position. A. The root of a bean seedling placed horizontally: the tip has taken up a vertical position. B. The tip of the root imprisoned in a glass in a vertical position. C. The closed end of the glass placed horizontally: the hinder part of the root is bending in response transmitted from the unsatisfied tip. From 'Plants,' (Cambridge University Press.)

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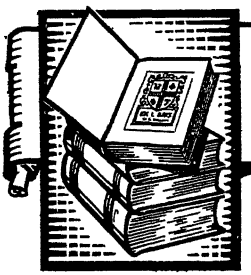
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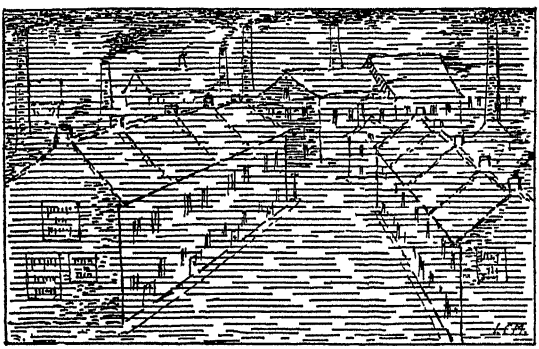
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I DON'T know what you mean by heritage –
Ho yus, I've got a vote! My tenement
Is down in Bethnal Green – not arf! My wage
Is not too regular – not like my rent.
I ain't read Shakespeare, and I've got no books,
But I can read the odds. I've seen the sea,
And several times the fields; I liked their looks
But hardly knew a crop or even a tree.

I haven't got no land or property
I do not know how anything is made
Or how the soil is worked. My job, you see,
Is with a hod! I never learned a trade.
No room for God-forbids,* my girl says straight;
I'm not complaining, mark you! London's great!

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The horny gollach's an awesome beast,
Souple an' scaley;
He has twa horns an' a hantle o' feet
An' a forky tailie.

* Children

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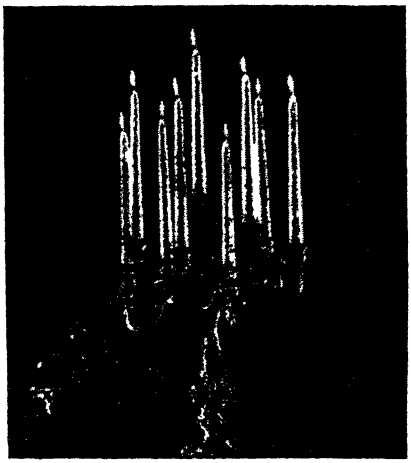
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shining life whose rays penetrate the soul, stirring one in an ecstatic love – is it the love of God?' Moreover 'there is a magic in correctness'. 'Too often, through weakening concentration, I have failed to listen to the still, small voice, and have cheated my work of its due. Patience combined with swift daring is needed, disciplined swiftness.' Of incidents of Rothenstein's life in his Gloucestershire farm-house none is more amusing than the description of the rick fire at which Max Beerbohm, 'gloved as usual, carried buckets of water from the well to fling on the blazing straw.' 'During frost or snow, Max would appear with socks over his boots (still begloved and carrying his cane) lest he should slip.' Among the serenities of the book special mention may be made of the account of the last days of a noble man, Stopford Brooke. Someone spoke to him of books. 'Why', he asked, 'should I read when I am so soon going to change the air?' Rothenstein says that some of his poet visitors amused him. 'I would take them through flowering orchards and hanging beech woods, yet they never seemed to notice anything. Yeats would keep his eyes on the ground; while Davies was with us, he would talk literary gossip, and ask my opinion of this or that poet, while cuckoos sang and rainbows arched the valley.' – Of that tragic family of villagers, the Brontës, E. F. Benson gives us in *Charlotte Brontë* (Longmans, pp. 330, 12*s.* 6*d.*) a searching, sane and sympathetic account, marked not only by painstaking but by wisdom. The true story of Haworth parsonage is more awesome than any of the fictions produced in it. – More than sixty years ago Sir Michael Hicks-Beach sought to influence opinion in his county in favour of raising the school age for farm-workers' children, for 'at that time it was not unusual for them to leave school at the age of eight'. During his lifetime many of the cottages on his estates 'were rebuilt or entirely remodelled, while repairs went on unceasingly'. Such touches of rural life are to be found dotted about Lady Victoria Hicks-Beach's essentially political two-volume



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biography of her father, *Sir Michael Hicks-Beach (Earl St. Aldwyn)*, published by Macmillan at 15*s*. On his seventieth birthday 'Black Michael' confessed that he had taken the opportunity of being alone in the fields 'to try whether he could still jump a hurdle – and had cleared it with something to spare'. – We fear that some of our readers may not yet have secured copies of *Our Fathers*, 1870–1900 by Alan Bott (Heinemann, 8*s*. 6*d*.), in which, in a volume of 250 pages, there is gathered together an astonishing collection of reproductions of 'illustrations' of the life of thirty years – 'manners, customs, morals, wars, sports, inventions and politics'. If it were not that many of us remember when we dressed like that and behaved like that, this presentation of our past would be unbelievable. The book is a diverting, bracing volume for the shelves of a house in the country. – Hugo Iltis's *Life of Mendel* (Allen and Unwin, pp. 336, plates and illus., 12*s*. 6*d*.) is a laborious and adequate account of the remarkable abbot and his work by a fellow townsman. Mendel came of a line of peasant gardeners and had a hereditary taste for chess. 'Stocky and rather corpulent, friendly of countenance, with a high forehead and piercing blue eyes, wearing a tall hat, a long black coat, and trousers tucked into top boots' is how he appeared in 1865 when he unfolded to fellow scientific workers, incapable of understanding his ideas, the great discovery he had made. He had had more then 10,000 hybrid plants under observation. Iltis discovered the original MS. of Mendel's classical paper 'in a box of papers destined for the flames'. In like manner the printed version, which appeared in 1866 in the 'Proceedings' of the Brünn Society for the Study of Natural Science, was utterly forgotten for more than three decades – until, in fact, 1900 – 'gathering dust unconsulted upon the shelves'. Mendel did not die until 1884. Was he ever in England? 'He used often to speak of England and English conditions with such familiarity that they believe he must have crossed the Channel'. He was an unusual being: he

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had few friends, bought only scientific books, and had no humour and no habit of letter-writing. Nothing survives from his pen which is in the least clerical. His favourite topic of conversation was bees. 'It was his custom in the spring when the bees began to emerge, to lay his hand on the board over which they crawled before taking flight, and after this they never attempted to sting him.'

The Hand and the Machine. – G. M. Boumphrey has made an interesting little book of *The Story of the Wheel* in the 'How and Why' series (Black, pp. 96, illus., 2*s.* 6*d.*) – *The New Draw-Loom, its Construction and Operation for the Use of Handicraft Pattern Weavers*, by Luther Hooper (Pitman, pp. 236, with diagrams, designs, working drawings and illustrations of woven webs in colour and monochrome, 25*s.*) is a sequel to the well-known author's *Table-Loom Weaving* and *Hand-Loom Weaving*. His confidence that his looms 'will be found, for domestic or studio use, more practical and adaptable than any other kind of weaving appliance' is likely to be justified. – Readers who as collectors or occasional performers are interested in wood engraving will like to hear of the veteran Bernard Sleigh's pleasant and practical volume, *Wood Engraving* (Pitman, pp. 170, 80 illus., 21*s.*). Apart from the author's counsels, criticisms and reminiscences, the book contains a large and valuable collection of representative work of famous engravers, some of it in colour. Certain all too familiar modern wood engraving, impertinent in its disregard of the virtue of overcoming difficulties, does not find a place. Against it may be set the amazing and beautiful productions of Sleigh and others. Their hair lines are a wonderful achievement, and in all they do there is beauty. Wood engraving has the great advantage that it can be followed in the country. Which of us knew, by the way, that there is a village called Woodcut and that the box-tree is 'only indigenous in Surrey, Kent and Gloucestershire'? – Except that THE COUNTRYMAN has always had a care for its typography, it is difficult to

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bring within our field Stanley Morrison's magnificent volume, *The English Newspaper, Some Account of the Physical Development of Journals printed in London between 1622 and 1932* (Cambridge University Press, pp. 347, with more than a hundred and fifty remarkable reproductions of newspaper pages, 45*s*.). The annals of printing deal with a craft that must of necessity be largely pursued in cities and towns – though many important book and magazine printing establishments have been taken out to the country – and the author of this praiseworthy tome, so learned in types, so laborious in study, so appreciative of typographic beauty, is a townsman of townsmen. His pages, demonstrating the sure and steady advance in the human outlook, are as stimulating as they are historically valuable. Reproducing as they do the earliest pages of journals on which the present writer served his apprenticeship to his calling, they bring him a personal thrill. The sight of a difficult task perfectly done in this work yields a feeling of deep satisfaction.

For Women particularly. – 'A practical cookery book for everyday use, containing traditional and regional recipes suited to modern tastes, edited by Florence White, alias "Mary Evelyn" and "An Innkeeper's Daughter",' *Good Things in England* (Cape, pp. 378, 6*s*.) must be the most human, the most interesting, the most trustworthy and the most practical culinary manual with which British housewives have been blessed for a long while. It is so clearly arranged that the recipes can be easily found and easily grasped. The range is extraordinary and the quality of the instruction first rate. We once heard a clever cook say that nobody can cook well who has not a juicy heart. All through the book one is reminded of the juiciness of its author's heart. She can only be satisfied when the very best has been done for her diners, lunchers and breakfasters. She is for her patrons faring, within reason, sumptuously every day. There are pages of the book calculated, as the Innkeeper's Daughter says, to take the guesswork out of cookery. As for the obiter dicta,

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there are plenty of such things as that 'cream with tea is a mistake if the milk be good'. Need it be said that there is a rural flavour in much of the book? Let us conclude with a sample English dinner for July, August and September:

July	*August*	*September*
Clear Carrot Soup	Green Pea Soup	Vegetable Marrow Soup
Lobster Salad	Red Mullet	Grilled Fresh Herring and Mustard Sauce
Roast Duck, Mashed Turnips and new Potatoes	Roast Grouse stuffed with Bananas	Mushroom Loaves
Stewed Green Peas	Sweet-cured Suffolk Ham with Lettuce and Pickled Peaches	Roast Ribs Beef
Strawberry and Raspberry Cream	Bilberry Pie	Partridge Pudding
Gooseberry Saucer Pie,	Grassy Corner Pudding	Green Artichokes
Cherry Pie	Potted Cheese and West Riding Oatcake	Mulberry Tarts
Cornish Cream		Blackberry and Apple Fool
Scotch Woodcock		Ham Toast

Abroad. – We have read many books about Holland but none which gives a more realistic account of polder land life and the farmers' struggle with the water than Herman de Man's *Rising Waters* (Bodley Head, pp. 264, 7*s.* 6*d.*), so effectively translated by Dr. Renier. The story of the voluntary breaking of the dykes on the coming of the floods, which are a yearly problem in the Netherlands, is a masterly piece of work and the study of peasant psychology is penetrating. Is it creditable that a book like this, which has had so great a sale in Holland and Germany, should not reach our public until six years old? – *Hindoo Holiday*, by J. R. Ackerley, author of 'Prisoner of War' (Chatto and Windus pp. 352, illus., 8*s.* 6*d.*) a record of six months' stay with a Hindoo Maharajah, thirty-five miles from a railway station, is a book of unusual discernment and power. The reader is at Chhokrapur along with the author. It is a memorable experience. The book is understanding, candid and timely. Here is the new, free, wholesome travel writing.

Sport. – The scope of *Lake Fishing for Salmon, Trout and Pike*, by Jock Scott (Routledge, pp. 202, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is

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indicated by the title. – *English Sport*, a breezy modest book of recollections and hints, by Captain H. F. H. Hardy ('Country Life', pp. 193, 8*s*. 6*d*.) strikes us as being about as good as it can be in its field. It reaches from hunting and shooting to fishing and yachting, and most pages have a thumbnail sketch on them. The author can be plain-spoken as well as informing and entertaining. 'It is not sport,' he says, 'to put aniseed at the mouth of a fox's earth.' Again, 'some huntsmen are much too fond of digging'. He is moved to indignation by a suggestion that birds should be allowed to 'get well away so that retrievers might have better trials' – with birds which were not killed clean but wounded. He is 'not sure that the hunting of carted deer should not be stopped'. – Readers who delighted in that charming volume, *A Summer on the Test*, will welcome the new book which Major John W. Hills, M.P., has written in co-operation with 'the greatest of dorado fishers', C. H. Harrisson, *The Dorado* (Allan, pp. 196, illus., 10*s*. 6*d*.). A female dorado weighed 46¼ lbs. – A large book, *Side-Lines, Side-Lights and Reflections*, by G. E. M. Skues (Seaforth and Soforth) (Seeley, pp. 473, 21*s*.) is a notable work by a well-known angler author. Piscator is now at home, now abroad and his discourse is most varied. There are experiences, his own and other people's, and pleasantries of all sorts.

Sir Charles Bright's *Let's Help* (reviewed in January) is published by Routledge at 4*s*. 6*d*.

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Our Readers' Motoring Tales – 18

I WAS motoring along a rural highway in Ontario one day this summer, when, rounding a clump of bushes near a bend, we came upon the smouldering remains of an automobile and three disconsolate men who had been riding in what had been a fine sedan. 'Well,' said I, stupidly enough, 'what's happened? Had a fire?' 'Naw,' came the reply from one of the group, 'just a sunstroke.'–*J.T.B.*

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AS ONE COUNTRYMAN TO ANOTHER

By what we have already said, you see our intentions. – *Cromwell*

IN this issue we conclude the plainspoken series 'Is it Cheaper to Live in the Country?' On the larger question 'Is it Better to Live in the Country?' we also print downright opinion. In THE COUNTRYMAN we have always been as candid on the disadvantages as on the advantages of rural life. There can be few country people who at some time or other have not wished themselves in town; there can be few townspeople who at some time or other have not wished themselves in the country. But most folk have been willing, according to their tastes and circumstances, to stay on in the country or the town. Happily, it is increasingly possible to divide life between town and country. Every countryman feels the stimulus of an occasional short visit to London; there can be a very small number of Londoners who cannot enjoy the country for a time. The truth need hardly be reiterated that the man who is fully occupied with a task that is worth while, and can maintain sound health, is in a large degree the master of his environment. In the crowds and distractions of London, many thousands flee from themselves; in the seclusion of the country other thousands are trying to dodge the criticism, the rubbing and the drubbing which life provides. In the country, as in the town, there are those who have not learnt to live to the full, who do not wish to live to the full. The Pities watch them being followed up by motors, wireless, television and aeroplanes, a shrinking

Is it Better to Live in the Country?

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world closing in on them. The common experience of a sensitive person forced back to London by the circumstances of his or her life, is effectively pictured in Sir William Rothenstein's 'Men and Memories'. 'During 1919 the question of a return to London had to be faced. Our children missed the companionship of others of their own age, and they were pining for concerts and plays. Country life suited me and my work, and it was hard to give up our beautiful home and the fields and woodland.' So the Rothensteins went to London. But London and London only would not do. 'During 1922 we moved to a house on Campden Hill; without a garden we could not endure life in London.' And later on, he writes: 'What a solace the garden was to us all! To return tired from work and to lie on the lawn, and, besides, the blackbird's song! – yes, the beauty of the face of the world, the green leaves against the blue sky, the noble shapes of the drifting clouds, the shadows on the grass, gave a solid answer to the wherefore of life.' Alas! the 'green leaves' of London may be sooty to the touch, and the atmosphere of London is charged with those impurities that cost the nation so many millions a year. But these shameful things need not be. Cities and towns are cleaner than they were a generation ago and might easily be cleaner still. And London, which is remarkable for having so many open spaces at its very heart, might arrange its outer development to include tracts of country. There is also no reason why the din of the metropolis should not be abated. Nor in the future need some industries remain urban nor the country forego many amenities of

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life which are now to be found only in great centres of population. Without a knowledge of character and pursuits, we may not say that a man or woman has chosen the better part in living by London or the country. In the future the best of the country will be brought into the towns and the best of the towns into the country. But as things are now – and, 'as far as thought can reach', are likely to be – he or she is most fortunate who, deserving to live in the country, may do so. Further, until rural life – not merely holiday-making in the country – means a great deal more to the average man than it does to-day, our national existence lacks sanity. To meet the picked brains of the world, to avail oneself of some of the resources of civilization, it may be necessary to go to London; but when the man who has lived for years in London and for years in the country says quietly that he cannot conceive of himself going back to London life, considerations are present to his mind that the 'true Londoner' hardly understands.

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As It Seems to Some of Us

To be a Seeker is to be the next best Sect to a Finder, and such an one shall every faithful humble Seeker be at the end. Happy Seeker, Happy Finder! – *Cromwell*

Plunkett, Geddes, Toynbee, Lethaby

SINCE our last issue the world has lost four notable men, Sir Horace Plunkett, Sir Patrick Geddes, Dr. Paget Toynbee and Professor Lethaby, all, we are proud to say, our readers. To the tributes paid to Sir Horace and the extracts

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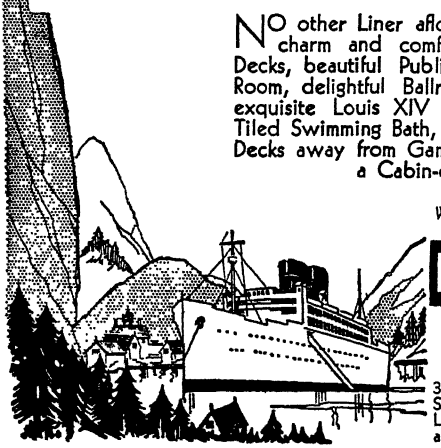
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from his own letters which appear in this issue we need add no word of our own. But, in writing to us, two other readers, Professor W. G. S. Adams and Mr. F. J. Prewett, draw attention to an aspect of his work which might be overlooked, and that is his influence on agricultural thinking abroad. 'I felt recently when in China', says the Oxford Professor of Political Theory and Institutions, who had been so long associated with Plunkett, 'how much his work is going to mean to that country. And is not the same true of India? And we know what his influence has been in the United States. We have seen a very great man whose work is going to grow and grow.' Mr. Prewett, of the Oxford Agricultural Economics Research Institute, the author of so many admirable brochures, had a close personal acquaintance with Plunkett. He writes: 'Whoever he may be that works towards "better farming, better business, better living" for the rural population does so under Plunkett's inspiration, even though he may be ignorant of Plunkett's career and even of the very name. His philosophy, much more important than his work in the actual organization of co-operatives, fills the needs of the countryman the world over. Plunkett was so naturally honest, so incapable of bitterness, so persistent and patient in his expectation of ultimate success, that he became inevitably the focus of rural welfare endeavour.' Mr. Prewett adds: 'He was a man of most generous and sympathetic understanding. His fine breeding and delicate manners attached everyone to him. He was one of the sharpest and kindest of wits. He was full of good reminiscence.'

ALFA-LAVAL
MILKING MACHINES

The Special Representative of the 'Farmer and Stock-breeder' writes in the issue of May 9th, 1932 —

I interviewed Major C. W. Tomkinson, of Willington Hall, Tarporley, Cheshire, who kindly supplied numerous details concerning his herd, which is tuberculin-tested for Grade A production.

Where each part of the equipment plays an almost indispensable part, it is difficult to single out any particular item as the most important; but the milking machine is perhaps of chief interest. This is an Alfa-Laval outfit of the magnetic type, and has been in use two seasons.

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'The Urban Mental Depression'

THE fine work of Dr. Paget Toynbee, who was a Life Subscriber, lay outside our sphere, but Sir Patrick Geddes, in his last letter to us, was concerned to bring about by his personal efforts 'greater agreement, with clearer statement of differences' between rural groups. Of THE COUNTRYMAN he was always appreciative. We recall a phrase of his about 'the urban mental depression you are fighting against'. The noble influence exerted by Professor Lethaby was a thing for which to thank Heaven. From the very start of THE COUNTRYMAN we had encouragement from him. 'It is a delightful thing and warms one's heart to know that it is being produced . . . I love THE COUNTRYMAN. The photograph of the cowman is most touching. Thank you greatly . . . This number is almost more like England than ever. The articles seem to me high statesmanship.'

The Long View

IN a letter from Gordon Bottomley to Sir William Rothenstein there is put into words an experience of many of us in our strolls in springtime and autumn: 'One of the supreme things in my life was the sight of two black plough horses suddenly appearing on the horizon of a steep furrowed field — apparently from an atmospheric gulf of tall mournful wood beyond. Two horses half rearing in the air, and a man's head below and behind, gave me all the sensations that the ancients received from the thought of the wagon of Dis suddenly emerging from the cloven ground.' At this point many a

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poet, at any rate many a man deeming himself poetical, would slack off into twaddle about the contrast between the grave air of the plough and the rawness of agricultural machinery. His imagiation would not stretch back to the day when the first iron plough took a wooden plough's place, much less to the scene when an early ploughman first tried to compel a horse to pull the plough which, before that, he and his woman had had to move along by themselves. Bottomley is more securely founded in his rural satisfactions. He acknowledges the completeness with which 'Nature' absorbs machinery. 'In half a century the whirr of the mowing or reaping machine has become as purely a country sound as the chirr of a grasshopper.' 'I suppose', he goes on to say, 'that once on a time the cart and the plough seemed as much machines as the self-binder and the tractor do now; the only difference is that the implement-makers have not yet learned to use iron so completely according to its nature. But that, too, will come.'

Local Dishes in Paris

OUR suggestion that more might be done in the way of proclaiming the merits of local dishes has produced an interesting proposal. It is that not only metropolitan but provincial city restaurants should have a local dish on their bills of fare every day. Mr. G. S. Peacock, who has this excellent notion, kindly sends us a batch of menu cards from Paris. It is the custom of several restaurants in the French capital to offer local dishes. Here, for example, is Le Boissy d'Anglas offering

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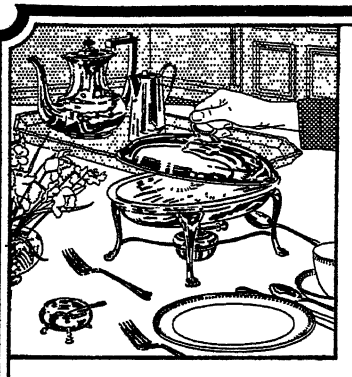
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'The Prophet's Chamber'

WE made the suggestion that readers with large houses and a room to spare might do good service by having a prophet's chamber, so that, from time to time, 'a man or woman with a streak of genius and a vocation might repay in the quality and volume of their work, the occasional quiet and refreshment of the country.' We are glad to say that a subscriber has just offered 'a genuine old cottage'.



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EPISTLES FROM AN OLD HOMESTEAD
II. *WHAT TO DO WITH OUR BOOKS*

Perhaps we are both mistaken – *Voltaire*

IN the country, because we have no libraries within easy distance to refer to, we all accumulate more books than we should ever do in town. We hesitate to thin them out, for we never know when they may not be serviceable. But if the County Education Committees would put up bookshelves in the schools, why should not our books of secondary value go there? They would still be within reach if we needed to consult them, and meantime many of them would be taken out and read. I assume the provision of a card-index as well as shelves. My plan of lessening the number of books which have to be dusted would not only gain us favour in our own homes but supplement the work of the County Council lending libraries. Besides, there ought to be rows of books in a school.

WHAT is the truth? Were the seasons better or worse long ago? It is a subject of continual interest. A subscriber, Mr. John Ross, favours me with an extract bearing on the matter from a memorandum left by his great-great-grandfather, David Ross, born 1694 – he lived to be over eighty – who farmed in Stone of Benholm, Kincardineshire. (George Ross, son of David, remembered the Duke of Cumberland's troops passing on their way to Culloden.) Unfortunately David Ross is largely concerned with 'the Devil and all his Angles'. But the following deals with the weather: 'Crop 1775 the Beans was bloomed the 12th Day of May,

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the Corn and Bean was shooting at the 11th June, the Peas was Blooming upon 7th June. The same year I eat Beans 26 June. Same year I eat ripe Gooseberries 30th June. Same year at Kinkardine Oneil new bean meal was sold before the middle of July. The Beans was so short as not to shear with hooks but plucked with hands. Same year the most of the harvest was Done in August and some of them before the middle of it. In 1778 it was a bad seed time. But I never mind a warmer Summer than it was. There was not a bad Day from the tenth of May untill the ninth and tenth of Octr. Both of them Stormy wind and Rain from the north but the Stoucks were for leading in four Days.' In March, 1776, Ross notes, 'potatoes was sold at two pence per Sack.'

WHEN will amateurs learn the value of giving plants or bushes or trees plenty of light and air? A nurseryman tells me that when hop-growers abandoned the practice of letting a hop-vine fare as best it might, twining up a pole, and went in for 'stringing out', the yield was quadrupled. The same man declared that 'the most astonishing sight in England was certain rhododendrons in Cornwall thirty feet through'. On the subject of the growth of trees he said that most people think their trees older than they are. He had an old foreman who was seeing to the planting of some fruit trees in the garden of a large house which had lately changed hands. Said the new owner, 'I believe these trees are as old as the Spanish Armada.' 'Hardly that, sir', answered the old fellow, 'I saw 'em planted.' — *Solomon Wisdom*

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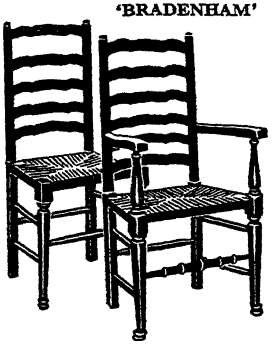
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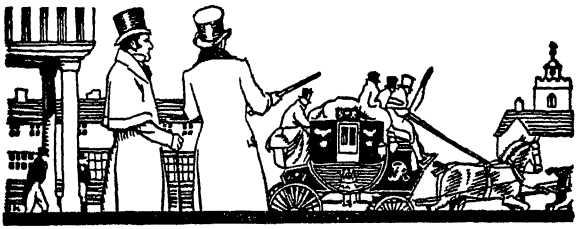
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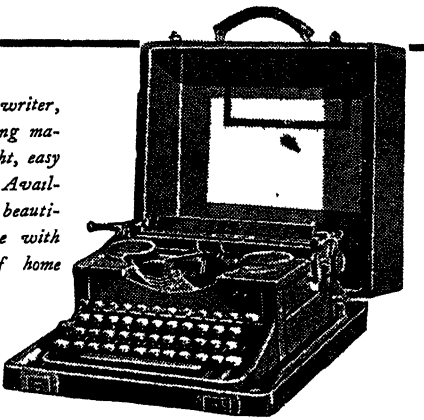
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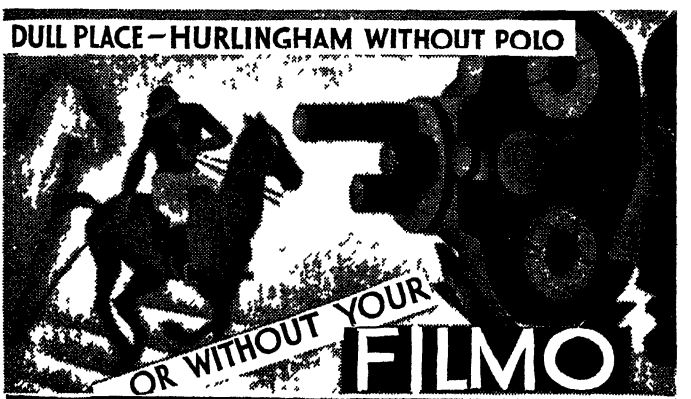
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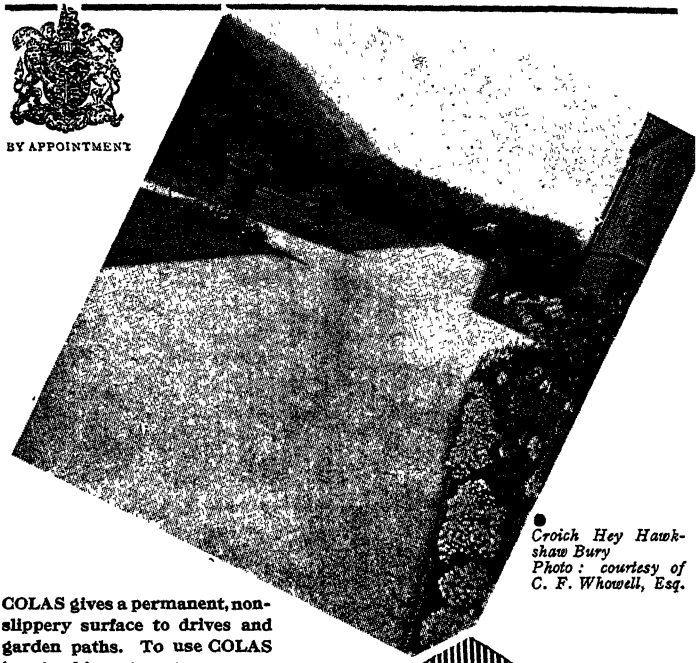
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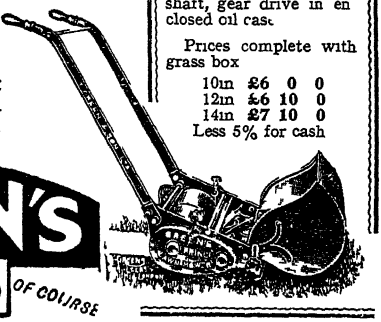
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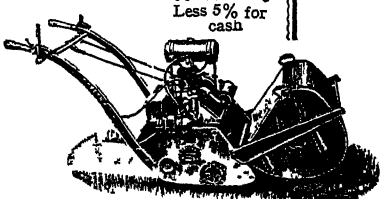
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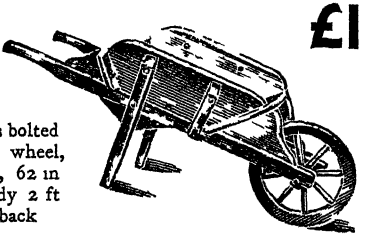
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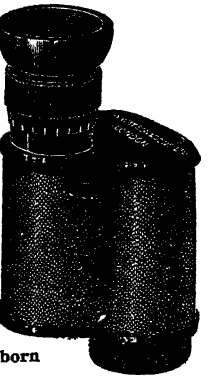
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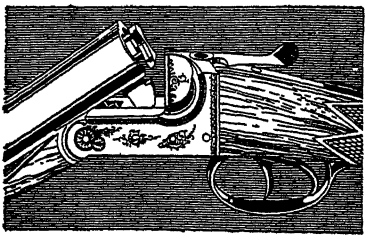
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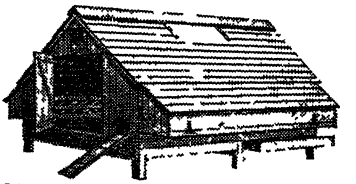
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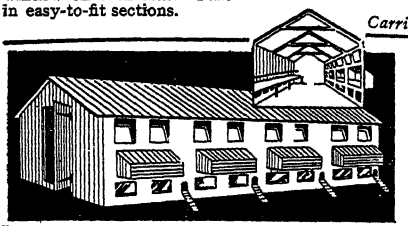
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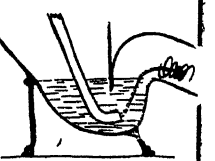
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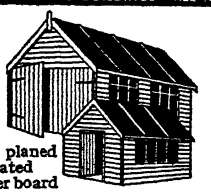
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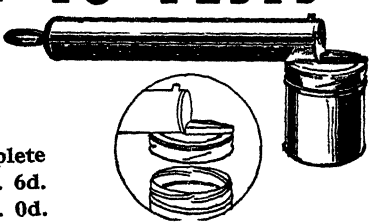
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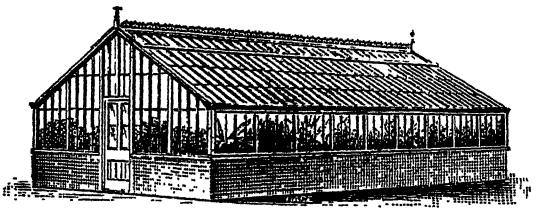
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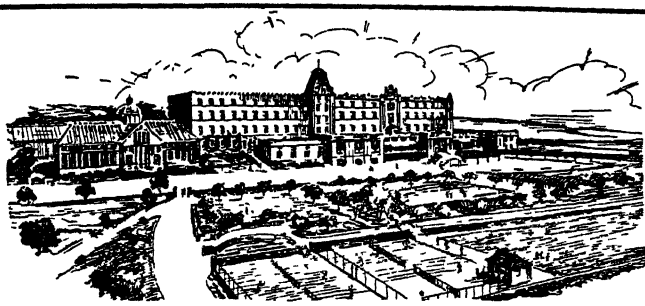
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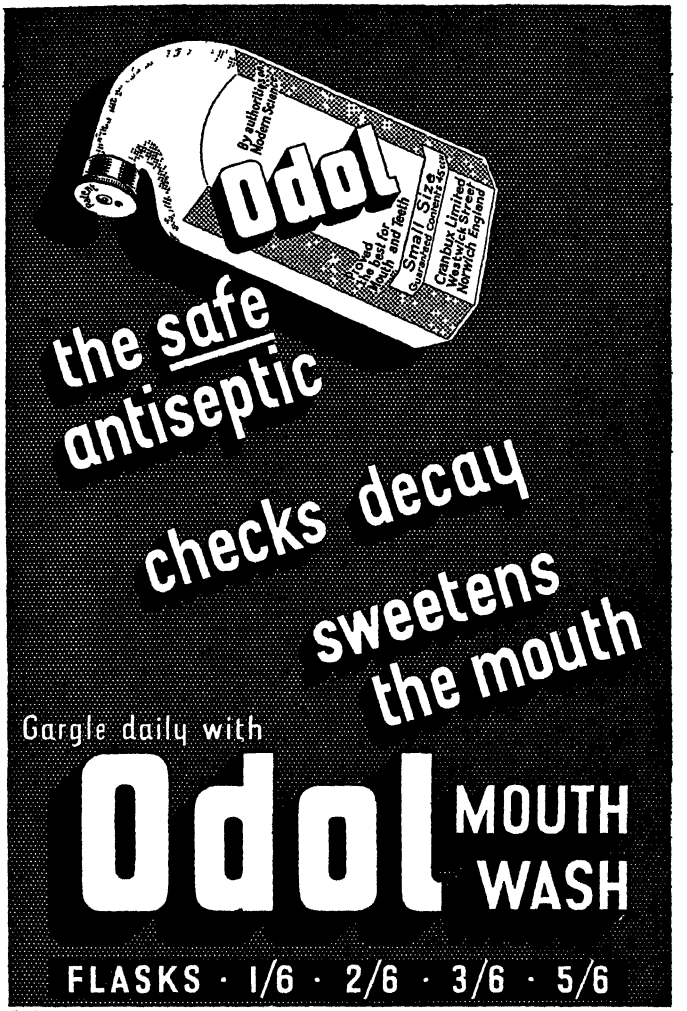
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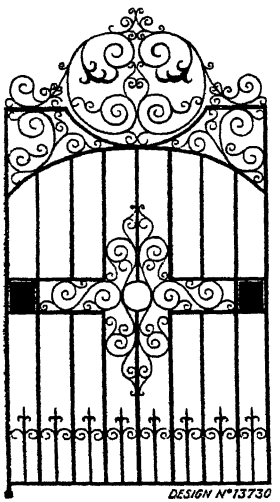
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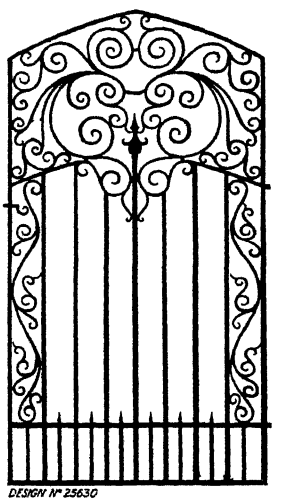
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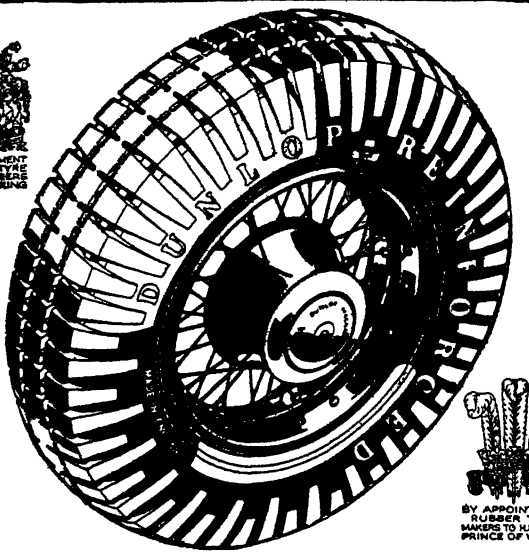
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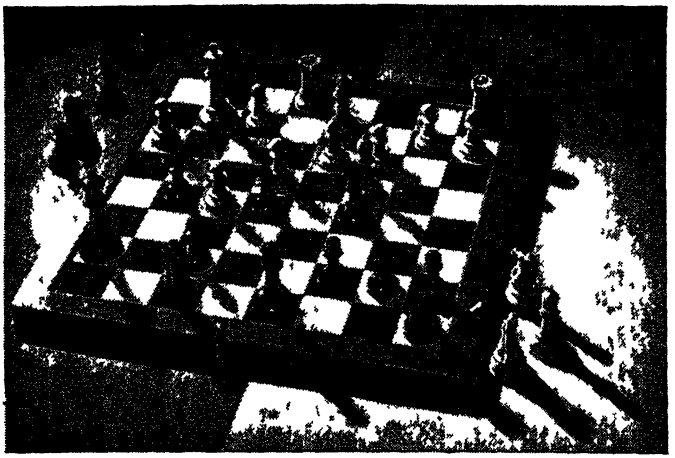
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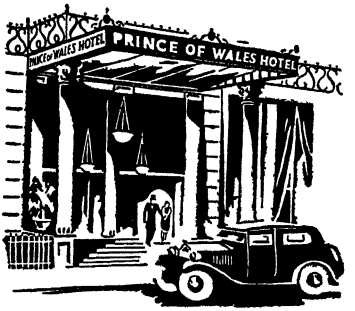
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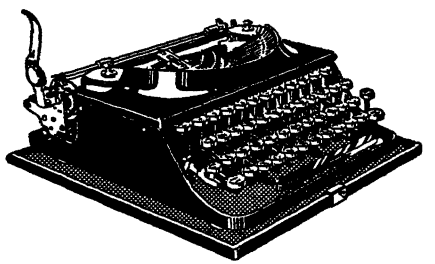
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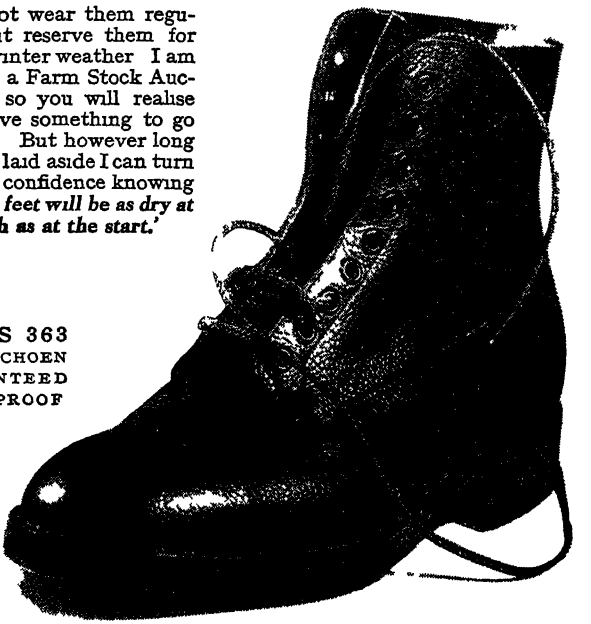
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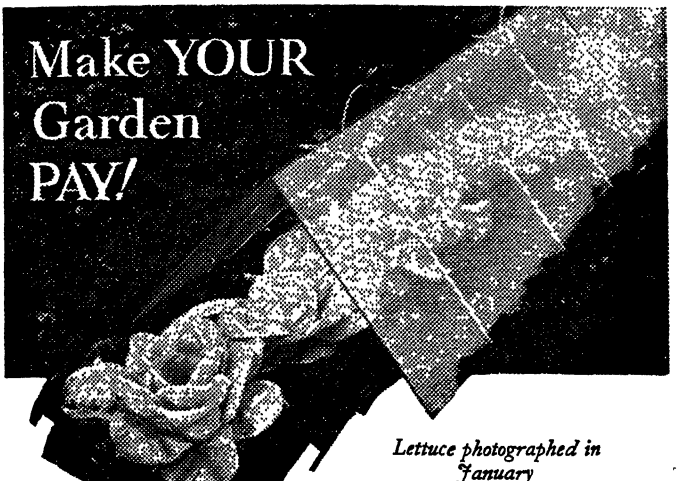
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The Countryman

A Quarterly Non-Party Review and Miscellany of Rural Life and Industry

Edited and Published by J. W. Robertson Scott at Idbury, Kingham, Oxfordshire

The best citizens spring from the cultivators—*Cato* Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee—*Job* O more than happy countryman if only he knew his good fortune!—*Virgil*

Vol. VI. No. 3 2*s.* 6*d.* quarterly October 1932

Cobbett calls on Arthur Young

by Mrs. Clement Parsons

A MILD *spring day in* 1792. *Two men have just seated themselves in the library of Bradfield Hall, Suffolk. This workaday room is walled by bookshelves, their contents chiefly concerned with agriculture, though observable besides are a complete edition of Rousseau, and 'Cecilia' in five volumes, for Fanny Burney is step-niece by marriage of* ARTHUR YOUNG, F.R.S., *the owner of the library. Latticed windows look over grass, a fish-pond, a Chinese bridge and cabbages. Through an open door is seen a small laboratory, filled with seeds in glass jars, retorts, plans of barns, models of ploughs. The older of the men is middle-aged, in face lively, in manner easy and unaffected. He wears buckskins and top-boots below a drab coat, and his unpowdered brown hair is tied behind. The other man, the visitor, twenty years his junior, tall and sturdy, carries himself with drilled stiffness. He is in nondescript*

dark attire of cheap quality, but, though obviously inferior in rank, WILLIAM COBBETT *yields nothing in self-respect and blunt sincerity of demeanour. The two are talking eagerly.*

COBBETT. For a moment I watched little Miss, wishful to add some early violets to her bunch of flowers. On the sunny wall where she was about to lean her hand I suddenly espied a movement of sliding gristle. I pulled her back and hit the viper dead with my stick.

YOUNG. Only your promptness saved my cherished daughter from snake-bite. I was riding home from our turnpike meeting when I came up with you. Little did I guess.... Are you staying in this neighbourhood?

COBBETT. I walked over from Bury, where my wife has relations, with the actual purpose of waiting on you, Mr. Young. I know your 'Annals' almost by heart, and, emboldened by this letter of recommendation from Dr. Priestley, was hoping for information you, above all men, could impart.

YOUNG [*glancing through letter*]. After the signal service you have rendered me no such recommendation – save for its own interest – is needed. I shall willingly serve you if within my power. What are these hard circumstances of which my good friend speaks?

COBBETT. At the end of six years with the army in New Brunswick, and discharged with honourable mention, I find myself in danger of arrest and imprisonment because I, a non-commissioned officer, denounced the embezzlements of certain com-

missioned officers in my regiment and, what was worse, joined in an appeal to increase foot soldiers' pay. I am advised to quit England immediately. My inclination wavered between America and France when three days ago in London I met with your phenomenal contribution to international knowledge – I refer, sir, to 'Travels in France'.

YOUNG. Disturbed though France still is, and with war on Austria just declared, you could do worse than reside there for six months. English gardeners and agriculturists are still in demand. An emigration to America might follow.

COBBETT. In France I should hope to better my French and teach English. My wife and I have saved two hundred pounds. I thought of Caudebec as a small place and one of the prettiest situated. I abhor great towns with their stenches and noise. My mind is wrapped up in everything belonging to fields and woods.

YOUNG. I judged you no cock-neigh. Plenty come prating here who scarce know wheat from barley, whereas, in farming, science is respectable only when the outcome of practice. As an agricultural maxim, the more a man works experimentally and the less he writes the better.

COBBETT. I have reason to believe that taste for a thing begets understanding. I was born on a Surrey farm and having got my rudiments in a smock-frock at the plough tail, I have never lost one particle of my passion for those heart-cheering pursuits in which every day presents something new. Though humble efforts of mine must ever remain at a vast distance beneath your own exertions, my

ambition is to study the husbandry of other countries in order to introduce reforms in the still rude and pitiable cultivation of much of British land.

YOUNG [*whose attention has wandered*]. Glance through that window, Mr. Cobbett. The old fellow mowing is eighty.

COBBETT [*readily responsive to a practical observation, hastens to window*]. And I thought scything, even when I was young, the hardest thing I had to do! To look on, it seems nothing; but it tries every sinew if you go upright and do your work well. A man must be of surprising strength to mow short grass at eighty. [*After a pause.*] Do you consider, sir, he uses the scythe correctly? But perhaps his stooping action is necessary; lawn shaving is a thing I never did.

YOUNG. Your comment is just, however. The swing of his body goes ever before the scythe instead of following it as it should.

COBBETT. With all that, it is good so old a man can still earn, even though his pursuit be a waste of time.

YOUNG. Nay, I differ from you. It is good husbandry to keep the homestead neat. A farmer who takes pride in his garden's tidiness will take the more thought for the orderliness of his land. His ricks must be well shaped, manure neatly stacked, hedges and ditches trimmed and cleaned, and, bent on seeing his farm shipshape in every detail, he will not brook ragged grass round his house.

COBBETT. I accept your rebuke. A labourer – such as I have been – looks only to bodily wants in rural doings, and, living, as labourers must, in damp dens fitter for the dead than the quick, we

get the habit of thinking a garden a luxury for the rich.

YOUNG [*offering Cobbett his snuff-box*]. France is a country to learn in, not, as I was half tempted, to farm in. House rent is low. What one profits by is the cheap mode of living; invariably bed-chambers are people's parlours. I recommend Picardy as more eligible than Normandy; more country is enclosed, also there are more new houses – that sure sign of prosperity.

COBBETT. What are the noticeable objects on highroads?

YOUNG. The superb causeways themselves. Yet circulation remains meagre in the extreme. Not a chaise, not a voiture of any description for miles. Great cities in France have not the hundredth part of intercommunication that much inferior places enjoy with us. As for newspapers, outside Paris I found none.

COBBETT. Is the present ferment more directly due to Rousseau and Voltaire or to the example set by America's revolution?

YOUNG. Hunger has been the immediate cause. The remoter causes were privilege, exemptions and absenteeism. When the Bishop of Llandaff spoke to me of the frothy revolutionary Frenchman with Voltaire in his head and the devil in his heart I replied this was a being I nowhere met.

COBBETT. Trust a fat prelate to take the wrong side in whatever concerns the welfare of the people.

YOUNG. Your contempt for episcopacy is scathing.

COBBETT. I include bishops, priests and beadles.

Big and little, they enrage me. Not excepting your namesake who wrote that bombastical stuff called 'Night Thoughts'.

YOUNG [*laughing*]. No relation, I assure you.

At this moment a tray is brought in with sherry, whey and cake. COBBETT *drinks – in whey alone – to* Miss Bobbin – did I hear your daughter's name aright, sir? – may she live to be the toast of the county!

To which YOUNG, *smiling acknowledgement, responds by pledging* The Maximum Output from British Land.

YOUNG. I have sent turnip seed and seed potatoes all over France where good sorts are still disastrously wanting. To look for a course of crops is vain. They sow white corn twice, thrice, even four times in succession. When I recommended turnips or cabbages for breaking their rotations of grain everyone laughed. The waste of land is scandalous. I itched to see the great park of Chambord laid to turnips. Yet in some forms of cultivation the French are ahead of us. I am growing chicory advantageously here from seed I brought from Lyons. Mr. Cobbett, I burn to own a score of farms from Land's End to the Cheviots and visit and direct their tillage by turns!

COBBETT. A Government worth its salt would create you Knight Premier of the Plough.

YOUNG. Now let us take a turn out of doors. I beg you to stay dinner which should be ready in twenty minutes though I regret Mrs. Young is too indifferent to quit her room.

COBBETT. I gladly accept of your hospitality.

YOUNG [*as they cross the kitchen garden*]. I will reserve the livestock till after dinner when I will show you the merino ram of which His Majesty made me a present.

COBBETT. I enjoyed its portrait in the 'Annals'.

YOUNG. Let us look forward to patriotism that shall pay more homage to the prince who gives a ram to a farmer than for flourishing a dubious sceptre over Bengal as till lately over Massachusetts. Yet I doubt whether the merino breed will count for as much as my lamented friend, Lord Orford's, importation of Southdowns into Norfolk.

COBBETT [*with a sigh of admiration as they enter a field*]. What a beautiful sight! Not a weed.

YOUNG. You flatter. I would God Almighty had left couch and crabgrass out of his creation.

COBBETT [*lovingly, as he walks, crumbling earth between his fingers, looks about him.*] Give me a farm with fields like yours, all rectangular, no crooked pastures, no open ditches, but the plough running right up to the roots of the fence. The land I love is deep tillage land where the only grass fields are rotation seeds and clover.

YOUNG. And all drilled. By drilling, a farm keeps as clean with a summer fallow once in six years as in broadcast husbandry fallowed every fourth year. Remarkable experiments are being carried out in our neighbouring county by Mr. Coke of Holkham. For five years he has grown wheat – wheat in West Norfolk!

COBBETT. Is he a wizard?

YOUNG. His wand is marl. But what think you of yon row of ash trees? Timber being rare here-

abouts, I planted twelve years back rather for ornament than profit. However, the second year I cut 'em down within an inch of the ground, and, now, the annual prunings give a reasonable return in fences, broomsticks and fuel. My cook even pickles the ash-keys in salt and vinegar. Luckily, no one yet has asked me to sever and hold open one of my ash in order to push a sick child through the aperture in hopes of a cure.

COBBETT. It was a common operation in Sussex. My father firmly believed that if the cleft would rejoin the poor babe would get well.

YOUNG. A universal pollarding disfigures East Anglia.

COBBETT. I love lofty trees. I sometimes think life's dearest satisfaction must be to watch a crow build in an elm oneself has planted. The interest of woods lies in their thousandfold sights, sounds and incidents. Even in winter a coppice is pleasant to the eye while comforting the mind with the idea of shelter.

YOUNG. People think of birds as having a hard time in winter and forget the warmth of woods which exceeds anything to be found in farmyards.

COBBETT. A tree is the second most wonderful thing in nature.

YOUNG. What exceeds it?

COBBETT. Birds and their flight. Birds in their frail way are as profound as trees.

YOUNG. Talk not of the flight of birds. Last November a gaggle of honking geese alighted on a field of mine and gobbled up all my winter greens.

COBBETT. And so, sir, the spirited and sensible

people of France have ridded themselves of tithes and salt tax. When shall we do the like?

YOUNG. Our insolent game laws must go first.

COBBETT. The sooner the better. A poacher is a man habitually half starved to whom a pheasant is not a thing of delicate flavour but something to still his aching belly. Seven years if he kills a pheasant; hanging if he lifts his hand to a keeper. Savage, is it not?

YOUNG. We must distinguish. The man who 'lifts his hand' is, or may be, a murderer. How much, in your opinion, does a labourer daily require to eat?

COBBETT. Require? Say one fiftieth of the food his labour produces. Say a pound of bread and half a pound of meat. What he gets compared with this reduces many a hardy and would-be honest man to a dejected assemblage of skin and bone.

YOUNG [*looking at watch*]. Time we turned homewards. A hot griskin of pork awaits us.

COBBETT. Then I thank God and your politeness that the ration just stated as the meed of labourers will not to-day be imposed on myself.

YOUNG. And now, Mr. Cobbett, we are by the pump. My maid has placed for us a napkin and a piece of soap by which I know dinner is ready to be served.

THOMAS DERRICK'S sketch on the next page is of William Paulin, ex-soldier, tree-feller, small holder, and commoner with grazing and other rights. Keeps sheep, pigs and poultry, and kills and shears. Never unemployed, and not interested in stock-market reports.



COUNTRYMEN—3

Drawn for THE COUNTRYMAN *by Thomas Derrick.* *See p.* 573

An Unpublished Cobbett Letter

by Sir Hugh R. Beevor, Bt.

COBBETT'S association with my grandfather, Sir Thomas Branthwayt Beevor, has been a great interest to me. There was a memorial of Cobbett in an acre of his 'locust' tree. It was felled, but largely reproduced itself by shoots, and the saplings will remain if their brittleness under the wind and rapid growth allow them to grow into timber. Over the mantelpiece at Hargham, from which the 'Eastern Tour' in 'Rural Rides' was dated, there is a good bronze medallion of Cobbett, but no MSS. have come down to me. Nevertheless, a quarter of a century ago a copy of the letter which follows was offered me by a bookseller in Birmingham. It is dated September 6, 1833, when Cobbett was 71, and is addressed to my grandfather, who was behind the 'Norfolk Yeomen's Gazette' and had proposed the raising of the fund to ensure Cobbett's return to Parliament. (The fund reached £1,700.) The letter has the refreshing breeze of Cobbett's language and requires no signature. It seems as if more personal parts had been omitted, for asterisks appear after some paragraphs. A friend has suggested that the letter is a caricature of Cobbett's style by some enemy scribe. It may be that the family row was a lively piece of imagination and mainly a joke and that the letter was largely chaff. Cobbett's distinguished editor, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, has been kind enough to give his views on the letter as follows:

'There was a row about money in the family in the summer of 1833, beginning over the Coventry Election in the spring — when J. M. Cobbett was put forward as a candidate, but William Cobbett would, or could, not put up the money. John Dean was put in as manager at Bolt Court in the latter half of 1833. Cobbett did sell his Westminster house early in 1834. The letter was obviously written with full inside knowledge. Its tone surprises me considerably; and I can't follow from it what the trouble really was, or at any rate the rights and wrongs of it. But it is probably relevant that an attack was launched on Cobbett at this time in the press on the ground that some of his books had been written not by him but by his children, and that he had not paid them properly, and had stolen the credit; and he thought this serious enough to reply very angrily in the "Register". So, on the whole, I think the letter is probably authentic; but it's a very odd production, and does not square with what I should have supposed apart from it about Cobbett's relations with his children. It was probably very evanescent violent temper — not, I think, chaff.'

THE power of attorney procured to operate against me and to my disgrace, by my dutiful and grateful son, [failed], for all purposes except that of furnishing a proof of the *real character* of that son and of entitling the greedy, lazy, and malignant creature to the contempt and abhorrence of all who shall ever hear of his conduct.

It is right that you should know, that the stock which I have delivered up to them is worth £2,200 at the lowest farthing; and that the copyrights which you hold, and two

in addition, which I have given to them since, are worth £10,000.

If what I have said be false, I am a base villain: if what I have said be true, I leave it for those who choose, to take part with such children.

As it is they are well off; they have as much as is necessary for them: they are all learned, in the true sense of the word, as to literature. They have all travelled in foreign countries: they can all write and speak the French language: they have had a mother to take more care of them than ever was taken with children in this world, and who would have nourished them with her blood, if necessary to their lives or their health. They have had constantly before their eyes industry and abstinence in a father, such as never were witnessed before: they themselves have, from the example of their parents, contracted habits of all the virtues, and the only thing that they have to lament or complain of is, *that they have had a father whose indulgence towards them, having known no bounds, has made them presumptuous and domineering.*

I have always been surrounded with expensive things, contrary to my taste, as well as hostile to my interest. In despite of me there have been music and wine, and my excessive indulgence has been outstripped by the expensive habits and desires of those about me. Far be it from me to impute to any one of my children, or to their Mother, a taste for profligate expenditure, or wastefulness of any sort, and still less a luxurious appetite for either eating or drinking. But the *scale* was pitched too high: a brace of maid-servants and a man, with now and then a help; a hundred a year for washing, out of the house; an apothecary a quarter part of the year; parlour, study, dining-room and bedroom fires, beside my lady-cook's blazing work; mantua makers and milliners out of the house, and a sempstress occasionally in it; chambers in the town for one son with furniture &c. and somebody kept to tramp to and from him; trips to Brighton, Isle of Wight, Herefordshire, Norfolk and else-

where, and one son six months at St. Omers, and a trip of the mother and another son to bring him home; two sons coming to the bar during the time: these things, some of them very necessary; and all of them proper if I had had a clear landed estate of five or six thousand a year; and, even as it was, I was content; I never found fault; I never should have given the matter a thought if you had been duly paid.

In proportion to their alarm at the approach of Dean their virulence and malignity became great. On the 29th of August, John & Nancy threatened me with bankruptcy and the loss of my seat, if I persisted in my design to introduce Dean. Now the time for Dean's entering the house was now approaching and the dutiful and grateful covey became excessively animated and spiteful. John began the attack by a quibbling, shuffling, mis-representing and most offensively disrespectful and insulting letter, of the 1st September, in which he showed that the study of the law had just made him a low attorney; concluding, however, with the practical proposition, that the covey should quit the side of the park, and all go and live at Bolt Court, and carry on the business, viz., take the money for my *Register* every week, brag of the economy and make me afraid to see you for the rest of my life, and into the bargain insult every friend of mine as they have done for many years, and as they insulted you and Lady B. when I came from the house and found you at a bread and cheese feast though I had invited you to dine, had told them so, and had come from the house to meet you! They had all gone from home on purpose as they afterwards had the impudence to boast, which is a pretty specimen of their obedience to my will.

John, finding that his paper bullets of the 1st of September had not brought down his bird, sent up the hen of his covey, who, you know has a tongue; and, if you do not know it, the people of Bolt Court now do; for, abuse such as she then poured out upon me, from the Sunday afternoon until the Thursday afternoon, never had its equal in this whole world

The others kept aloof and pushed her forward as an *enfant perdue*. The case was indeed desperate; Dean was approaching the honey pot, and if once he got there, it was all over. I must confess the case had become desperate with me, likewise, the movement, on my part, in placing Dean at the pot, I knew was my last resort; and, I resorted to it something in the same way and upon the same principle that the Grand Signor acts, when he causes the unfurling of the Standard of Mahomet.

Thursday the 6th September in the year of our Lord 1833 and the 4th year of His Majesty the King was a day of hot work. The indefatigable and virulent little hen seeing the brood disturbed, and urged on by their clamours, rushed to the dwelling of Dean and there pitched on upon Mrs. Dean, knowing her to be of softer materials than her husband; and it required uncommon generalship for me to muster my forces and bring up Dean himself after this to the fight. 'Take any shape but that' said Dean. But if Thursday was hot what was the forenoon of Friday? that was publishing day for the *Register*; thirty sovereigns were to come, in the course of two hours that afternoon. John, not having received a letter he expected from you on the Thursday, by the means of which he was fully resolved to capture to condemn as lawful prize the 30 sov's. had slipped off to Norfolk on Thursday night in the hopes of getting from you a power to eject Dean, if he got into possession to replace him by the trusty Leonarda, the prototype of whom is recorded in Gil Blas. At a very late hour on Thursday night, and not till then, I announced to the dame the actual approach of Dean. At peep of day on Friday morning Dean came, and I put him in possession by key of street door and key of shop door having previously signed an agreement that made him tenant of the house. Then first going to the bedside of Leonarda to announce to her that Dean was in possession, I myself beat a retreat to Normandy, leaving Mr. Guttsell and persons under him to move out the baggage

belonging to the enemy. It was now that the fight became furious indeed, poor Dean had to endure volley after volley of tongues, banging from Mother and eldest daughter, such as never before fell upon the devoted head of man. It was in vain that he said that he was only there to take the money for Master. This simplicity of defence only enraged them the more, but the grand stroke of all was the power of attorney from you, which was intended to frighten Dean from the Honey Pot, John, by being absent in Norfolk to worry and alarm you, could not come to present this Power of Attorney. Nancy, therefore opened the letter, brought it up, and in the presence of Mr. Gutsell and Agg, the Bookbinder, read it to Dean & added as loud as she could bawl that 'I had nothing in the world; that every chair, table, knife, spoon, blanket, sheet; that everything I called mine was Sir Thomas Beevor's'. When you were writing that letter in the form of a power of attorney, little did you dream of the falseness of the pretence, that had induced you to do it, still less did you dream of the uses that would be made of that letter, and least of all did you dream of the consequences of that reading which consequences I now state.

Well, then what is to be done now? For there are some things that can be sold, at some price or other, and I will proceed to sell till I get you your £2000 not so quickly as they might have been gotten, had it not been for the proclamation, but still in a few weeks the first thing that I shall sell is the premises (or lease), the fixtures, and the goods of all sorts, furniture of every description and every article of property, selected books and everything else in the house that I rent in St. James's Park, including those in the study, in which you & Lady Beevor were so generously and politely regaled with bread and cheese. That I will begin with. I will then come to Bolt Court, and I will gut and strip to the very bookshelves; and if that be not enough I will then go to the farm. I think I shall get plenty before I get out of London; but, if I do not, I will go to the vicinage of the

graves of my parents. I will begin with the corn, and the seeds, then go to the cows, and the calves, and then I will go to the pigs, and then I will go to the horses; then I will go to the Flitches of Bacon, and the pork-tubs and from them to the bedsteads, and the beds, but all the devils from hell shall not get me out of the farm-house into which I will soon bring other beds and into the homestead of which fresh cows, horses and pigs, shall soon come and that too in great abundance, there being large crops of roots and cabbages for them to eat. Talk to me of feelings, indeed! Hurt my feelings! There is no shame in it for me. It all came from my labour and when it is gone more will come out of that labour, and if the labour then ends I shall still be happier than those who drew their life from me and who are now vainly seeking to cover me with disgrace. But, my dear Sir, it will not be so, I shall live and last and be admired and be loved by millions of just and sensible men. Hurt my feelings, indeed! Chairs and tables hurt my feelings! Those know but very little of me who think that these circumstances will abate one jot of that spirit which has carried me from the plough tail to a seat in Parliament. What! There are three of them now at this moment, living in lodgings at Brighton for the benefit of their health, and this, too, not only without any consent of mine; but without my knowing anything of the matter except by accident, when I found that they were there for two months! I hear too, by accident also that the youngest son who is bound to an Attorney and whom I keep in my house, has been to visit the gentlefolks at Brighton and has gone thence to Winchester and thence to Newbury; and all this without my knowing anything of the matter except by accident from other persons, and these persons have the audacity to charge me with wasting my substance and one of them proposes to be made a Trustee over me to receive my weekly earnings! Damnation, Eternal damnation – rather than such a trustee for a single hour! Chairs and tables hurt my feelings after this! They taunt me with

the assertion that all is yours and nothing mine; that I can sell nothing and give nothing away except to themselves, I suppose they mean; for they have since I became your debtor been pleased to allow me to give many things to themselves amongst which things are the £3,225 worth of Book stock and the Copyright & plates of the Geographical dictionary and the 'spelling book', these rights alone being worth more than £2000.

However, as all is yours and nothing mine, by God, you shall have all that is in that house.

Lear's two daughters were angels compared with these. They had husbands to urge them to set gratitude and nature at defiance, and that which he had given them had not been the fruit of his toil. He might at some time or other of his life, have, in some one instance, treated them coldly or harshly; mine have had affection or indulgence uninterrupted by even a single frown.

You see, that I understate everything that I had given them; I said £2,200 in stock, it is £3,225 and that too reckoned at a rate which makes the above £38 11. 9. only £25 14. 6. So that in fact I have given them £4,902. I told you that they had six or seven hundred Pounds a year. It appears according to this fortnight's work that they have £988 a year, and of course, amongst five of them, very nearly £200 a year apiece, instead of the £100 which I said.

They have received then pretty nearly one thousand pounds a year for these books only, ever since the money was borrowed of you. Have they spent all this money then or have they got a hoard? It is necessary to come at the true answer to this question before we can decide upon the precise terms that we ought to make use of in describing their conduct towards their most affectionate indulgent and boundlessly generous Father.'

A further reference to this letter is made in our 'As It Seems to Some of Us'.

My Cottage Garden—2. Alpines

by the Rt. Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain

IT must be nearly forty-five years ago that, one Sunday morning, when my father and I were visiting Kew Gardens, under the auspices of the late Sir W. Thistleton-Dyer, he took us into one of the enclosures where, he said, he had something new to show us. The novelty was an unheated greenhouse filled with pans of Alpine plants. I remember saying to my father as we drove back that if I ever had a garden of my own, I should not attempt to grow orchids but that I must have an Alpine house. Thirty or more years passed before I owned a garden; by then much more was known of Alpine plants and their cultivation, and I determined to have a rock, or as I prefer to call it, an Alpine garden instead of the house. A house would require daily care and watering, and I could visit my cottage only at week-ends.

Thus when I obtained my cottage the first thing to decide was where to place the Alpine garden. Below the terrace, the lawn, whose earlier use as an orchard was recalled by two old apple trees still standing in its midst, sloped down to a hedge in which a stile gave access to a small field. But the hedge was not parallel to the house, and the shrubbery border on one side of the lawn was not parallel to the yew hedge which divided it from the kitchen garden on the other, so that the lawn formed an ugly rhomboid. This was corrected at the sides by the realignment of the shrubbery border, giving

room for a herbaceous border in front of the flowering trees and shrubs, and at the bottom by planting a yew hedge parallel to the terraces, in front of which we placed a herbaceous border, broken in the centre by a wide grass walk leading to the stile. Between the two hedges there was now an elongated triangle. To the right of the grass walk my wife made a small sunk garden filled with polyantha roses; the left and larger section I chose for the site of the Alpine garden which would thus be hidden from the house by the yew hedge as soon as it had grown about four feet high.

There, then, was the site, not perfect but not a bad one. The next thing was to make the garden. My first attempt was a failure, though I put up with it for two or three years. I did not know what I wanted beyond the fact that I wanted a rock garden. I did not know what was necessary except rocks. I called in a local man and said, 'Make me a rock garden and let me have rocks, not pebbles'. He fulfilled my requirements with good-sized blocks of the local sandstone, and at first I was very pleased with the effect. I visited spring shows, pored over catalogues and planted enthusiastically and optimistically, but my plants did not grow. I could repeat the easier successes of the terraces, but the things which I most wanted to see succeed dragged out a miserable existence or died upon my hands. Only two things do I recall as making really fine specimens; these were a Lithospermum prostratum, heavenly blue, for which I chanced upon just the right position at the top of a big rock with a cool root run down the back of the stone into deep earth.

In two years or so it had covered the top and hung three feet or more down the rock face. The other success was provided by two plants of Anemone sulfurea which will appear again in this story. But of drainage and soil and how to place the rocks I had thought little and knew less. It was all to begin again. The experiment had cost something, but it had taught me much. I wrote some articles, was fortunate in finding favour with a generous editor and accumulated a sufficient sum to start afresh. This time I knew what I wanted and I found the right man to understand my ideas and supply my deficiencies. The rules for an Alpine garden are:

1. See that the drainage is good.
2. See that the soil is suitable and that in different places you have the various kinds which you will require.
3. The rocks should be large. Like icebergs, only the smaller part of them should appear above the surface.
4. Let the soil be well rammed down around and between them so that no holes are left in which the roots as they grow fail to find sustenance. The builder knew all this as well as I did, and it was a pleasure to see him and his foreman handling and placing the great rocks. The largest weighed nearly 15 cwt.

I chose weather-worn limestone for the stone and I expressed my desiderata as follows:

1. I must have a cliff-face with northerly or cool exposure.
2. I wanted a peat-bog.

3. There must be a low Alpine meadow and
4. A high Alpine meadow.
5. There must be a moraine or scree.
6. The new garden must somehow be built around my beautiful Anemone sulfurea. They were doing too well to be disturbed.

I rejected the idea of a pool, for I felt there was not room for one, but I jumped at the suggestion of a rhododendron forest. In the end the garden was all my fancy had painted; but here you must use your imagination. My rhododendron forest consisted at first of two, later of three R. ferrugineum and three dwarf Himalayan hybrids. Daphne Blaygayana flourished among them. Give it a cool peaty root-run and throw a stone at it whenever you pass. It likes these rough love-makings and will reward you for them with its sweet waxy flowers in early spring. Androsace lanuginata trailed over the rock in front.

I had not one but two cliffs, each some three feet high, and at the bottom a peat bed kept moist by drainage from the rocks and path. In the ledges and crannies of the cliffs I grew Primula marginata, Wilsoni, viscosa and some garden varieties, but Wilsoni never, I think, survived more than three winters. In the peat were P. rosea (this seeded itself freely and would grow in any damp shady spot in the path at the base of a rock), P. chionantha, involucrata and others, besides Orchis foliosa, Cyprepedium calceolaria and Pyrola rotundifolia, both collected by me in Switzerland, and Parochaëtus communis with a leaf like clover and a pea-shaped flower of the blue of G. verna. I name only enough flowers

to give an idea of what I was striving for and the results obtained.

The low Alpine meadow, say 12 feet by 8, made a good place for Alpine crocuses and tulips and a small scilla collected on the cliffs of Newquay and Brittany. These were followed by Anemone fulgens, and a marvellous magenta-coloured variety brought home by Lady Chamberlain from Palestine. Later came A. narcissiflora looking like apple blossom in bud, A. Alpina and sulfurea, and the yellow globe flower. The first time I saw A. sulfurea it was a single plant in a pocket of a great moss-grown limestone boulder beside a flooded mountain stream in the Pyrenees and my heart leapt with delight. The first time I saw A. Alpina was when making an excursion in the Jura with Dr. Correvon. It grew so thick that in the distance I took it for a large patch of snow. Then I added the great yellow gentian and other plants of like size and similar habit. There was hardly one of these which I had not collected myself, and the memory of the places in which they were found added to one's delight in seeing them grow and flourish.

The high Alpine meadows were on a smaller scale; they were intended first and foremost for G. verna, but I always tried to get a succession of flowers if possible, and I convinced myself by experience that except in the case of those which live in some tight cranny of the rocks, it is a mistake to plant one's precious things apart, as, in his anxiety for their safety, the amateur is apt to do. Think of the close short turf of the high Alpine meadow where you find G. verna in masses. It is never alone; it has to

fight its way up and down through the turf itself and in and out among G. acaulis, Primula frondosa, violas and I know not what other small beauties. They grow so thickly that you cannot put your foot down without treading on several kinds, and they will be more likely to succeed in your garden if you make them fight for existence with plants of their own size as nature does. I planted Narcissus minimus, Androsace carnea and chamaejasme, viola bicolor, Dianthus neglectus and such-like things with mine. But G. verna is notoriously contrariwise. After all the best patch I ever saw in cultivation, two feet across each way and a sheet of blue like cloudless Italian sky on a summer day, grew within five miles of the centre of Birmingham. I asked the gardener how he managed it. 'I grow them from seed,' he said, 'and prick them out.' He did not appear to be aware that he had accomplished anything out of the ordinary. He had boxes of the seedlings in a frame. There is a variety of G. verna called angulata, which is a trifle larger in leaf, though otherwise indistinguishable to anyone but a botanist, which I found easier to grow.

There are few joys like a garden and in a small garden none which gives such constant interest and light occupation as an Alpine garden. In my own every plant after the first twenty or so was planted and tended by me. It is the amateur's garden par excellence, for after this first making it requires no heavy spadework, whilst the plants have character and individuality and require constant attention and skilled treatment.

(*To be continued*)

Great-Grandmother goes to Dorset

THIS is the second instalment of a 'Journal', written 137 years ago, by a lady who, happily for the readers of THE COUNTRYMAN, *deemed travelling from the Isle of Wight to Dorset an adventure worthy of the most careful record*

THE situation of Chantmarle House is calculated to inspire Poetic Enthusiasm, but however inclination may plead, time will not permit attention to the whole. Suffice it to say the sublime and beautiful are united, and what adds lustre to the whole, is that domestic harmony and love distinguish the happy pair while social enjoyment and friendly Intercourse extend their influence around. In this calm Retreat it was impossible, without doing violence to nature, to admit a discontented or repining thought. Harmony prevails in all we see and Sincerity crowns the whole.

The magnificent building of Chantmarle I think resembles in imagination what is so pathetically described in the 'Mysteries of Udolpho,' the old Manor House. The Chapel, which is annexed to it, is now converted into a wood house. Its ceiling is most curiously ornamented, and several Niches in the wall show that it had once more serious Embellishments. I am informed that Sir William Oglander never enters this place, which was formerly devoted to religious worship, without taking off his Hat. Perhaps the recollection of his departed Ancestors may excite this respectful attention, and a sigh may escape him in walking over the paths which they have frequently trodden!

The afternoon being fine, Mrs. Petty, Aunt Sarah and myself rambled to Frome. It is a pretty, neat Village about half a mile distant from Chantmarle. Mrs. Baker and the Bridges family reside there, who appear to be very agreeable people, the Miss B.s particularly so. We were much pleased with our Reception, and with pleasure attended our worthy friends next morning to the Parish Church, where we heard a tolerably good Sermon from Mr. Bartlet. He is a personable man and, as I am informed, a chosen companion of those who cry 'Vive la Chasse', but does not seem to possess that Merit which should distinguish a person of his profession, and I am rather sorry to see Miss B., who is so truly amiable, regard him with a partial eye. On our return home, we called at Mr. Baker's, and sat an hour in the Summerhouse, which is lofty, and commands an extensive view of the country. I could not avoid remarking that the Cattle in this, and the surrounding Pastures are exceeding fine, the Sheep are so deeply vermilioned that they appear more like a Regiment of Soldiers at a distance than the peaceful rangers of the Valley!

Sunday afternoon, a jaunt to Sydling was proposed, but from having unfortunately taken cold I was too unwell to enjoy the prospect. It has been remarked, however, that when we sometimes depend on any particular gratification we are disappointed, and, on the contrary, when we least expect it that we are frequently led to enjoy it. So it was in this instance, and when the travelling carriage was brought to the door, and my kind friends invited me to accompany them, the little Indisposi-

tion which I felt immediately vanished. Dear Mrs. P., myself, Sarah and the Miss Conways entered the carriage. These young Ladies deserve particular mention, their Persons and manners are extremely engaging, a cheerful smile and desire of pleasing is expressed in their whole deportment, and it is impossible to know and not truly esteem them. Every effort did they make to render the excursion pleasant to us, and we were too sensible of their goodness to be unmindful of their exertions. On the road to Sydling they entertained us with several charming songs, which brought us imperceptibly to a view of the Parish Church. The buildings are chiefly whitened and form a happy contrast to the smiling meads and venerable Oaks that surround it. 'Tis a beautiful Valley, and the hills on either side render it the most picturesque scene imaginable. We took tea at Mr. Devnishes, who is a most excellent farmer, and has a pretty modern-built House, an agreeable Wife, and an accomplished Daughter, who entertained us with playing several tunes in great style on the Harpsichord, and afterwards accompanied us in a walk to Sir John Smith's whose Shrubberies are beautiful. This Gent. by all description is not a little proud of his title.

'Tis not the gaudy trappings of the great
Can wake Attention from her calm retreat.
More rural scenes invite her simple lays,
And real Merit claims distinguished praise.*

Our return to Chantmarle was particularly delightful. All the old songs were rumaged o'er, and

* Lines by the Author





HOW IT SEEMED TO DAMUR MALI

These sketches were made by a deaf and dumb native of twenty-four on the plastered wall of a farmer's barn near Grahamstown in Cape Colony. The incidents pictured are a train coming out of a tunnel, a mounted police raid upon a native beer-drink and dance, unseated horsemen, cars passing through a 'dorp,' cattle escaping, two ostriches alarmed, a native woman stamping maize and natives ploughing In painting a man the artist starts at the feet, gradually working up to the head His crude pigments were soot mixed with sweet milk and red ochre. His brush was a reed chewed and softened in the mouth

the 'Dumb Wife' being unexpectedly introduced, afforded laughter. Indeed, the excursion had entirely removed every symptom of Indisposition.

The next morning I arose early and amused myself by taking a sketch of the charming country around us. At breakfast a Venerable Man was introduced whose name is Harvey. He is Pastor of the Independent Meeting at Cerne and had walked four miles on hearing that Mr. Petty had commenced Haymaking, to offer his assistance, which must have been no inconsiderable exertion, as he was rather 'en bon point'. The good Parson and myself had a long conversation respecting Mrs. H. Moore's* publications, and the time passed very agreeably in attending to his remarks on that and other serious subjects, after which we all took a pleasant walk in the surrounding fields and were much interested in the animated scene presented to us. The hour of dining was that day retarded in consequence of Mr. and Mrs. Quartley, the new-married pair, being expected to join us. On their arrival the usual congratulations were expressed, and in the afternoon Miss Bridges drank tea at Chantmarle House, when the ceremony of drawing Cake thro' the ring was performed by the young people with much glee.

Wednesday morning passed off in attending to domestic concerns, working and reading, and In the evening we enjoy'd a delightful ride to Milbury Park, the seat of Lord Ilchester. The road to this place is good and surrounding objects beautiful. The grazing Sheep and sportive Fawns afford a

* The old-fashioned use of Mrs. for Mistress. The reference is to Miss Hannah More

truly pastoral scene, the House is large and magnificent, and the walks are pleasant. An old Church which we passed on entering the Shrubbery adds much to its romantic appearance.

Friday, Mrs. P. and self walked to Frome, called at Mrs. Bridges, took tea at Mr. Baker's, play'd a rubber at whist and supp'd, when Mrs. Quartley and Miss Conway joined us and we returned sociably home.

Saturday morning we prepared for our visit to Hatchlands, and the same sociable Vehicle that convey'd us to Sydling brought us to that place. The country thro' which we passed was in every part extremely pleasing, but the views from White Sheet Hill of Beamister, Bridport Harbour and Weymouth, exceed description. The proud Exaltation with which I have celebrated the Isle of Wight seems to be almost forgotten whilst contemplating this truly enchanting prospect. Our arrival at Hatchlands Hall was hailed with much sincerity and friendship. Mrs. Conway is the respectable Mother of a numerous and amiable family. Harmony in the most extensive sense may be said to prevail amongst them as they each possess considerable musical abilities.

Sunday, Mrs. P. and myself went to Bridport to hear our friend Mr. Howe preach there. After the service we were introduced to several of his particular acquaintance. We dined at Mr. Fawcett's, and again attended the afternoon Service, which was conducted with much impressive solemnity. Mr. H. presented me with the form of prayer which he thinks has produced great seriousness amongst his

people. After taking tea with the ladies, we returned, and it being a delightful evening we very much enjoy'd the ride. When Miss Conway had read the Scriptures, we were indulged with a concert of sacred music, Mr. Conway playing admirably on the Violincello, his sister on the Pianoforte, Mrs. Quartley and Master James on the flute. The celebrated Ode of Dr. Watts 'for happy matches' was performed with great applause, with other pieces, and we enjoyed the Sublimest satisfaction.

(*To be continued*)

A Riding Holiday

'ON foot the fatigue is too great; in any sort of carriage one cannot get into the real country.' For this reason our family holiday was taken on horseback. Five horses were sent by rail from Warwickshire to Dunster – cost a little over £20 – and from this starting-point mother and father, son and daughter, and a factotum set off to ride over Exmoor and along the coast of North Devon. A limited but adequate amount of clothing, etc., was carried in waterproof rolls attached to the saddles. The greatest distance covered in one day was from thirty-five to forty miles. We found, however, that twenty miles a day was a more comfortable distance. Cross-country tracks often prove rough and mean for the horses a good deal of walking, even scrambling! Gone are the days when country inns advertised accommodation for both 'man and beast'. Even those inns and hotels that still boast stabling can seldom provide fodder. The best quarters our horses had were at professional riding stables. Off the beaten track one must rely on farms. The most we were charged per horse per night was 6*s.* 6*d.* and the least 3*s.* 6*d.*; this included stabling with straw, oats and hay, but no grooming. – *D.J.O.*

The 'R' Card Cottages

by G. F. Strickland

THE cart was guided by a pensive and benevolent youth who scanned windows of cottages for the red 'R' card. His journey was half completed. Baffham and Tamp Corner had been covered, and he was working the scattered hamlet of Tilden. Wotham Green, a large area, remained for the afternoon, Varsley for the following day. Three villages were finished yesterday. At the first 'R' card in a window I relieved the boy of his roll of threepenny tickets and chatted with the householder: 'Yes, in our village we're glad to be freed of our stuff; it lies about the garden, and one feels ashamed to throw it in a farmer's field under cover of dark. You've raised the charge from twopence to threepence, but I've no objection if the other didn't meet your expenses. Here are my lot of bottles and tins, and some old hoop-iron; can you take that too? All the ashes are spread. How often would I like a collection? Say every three months, and there'll be just about this much to be carried away every time.'

A neighbouring cottage without the red card is tried, mainly to discover why some have no rubbish to clear. The good woman is secretive at first, but expands after friendly conversation. There is all her collection in a sack, but not for us. She knows an old quarry, not authorised as a dump, and when the sack is full, she or her son carry it down by night and tip it out. No one has ever caught them,

though, of course—still, we may take it this time, and she pays her threepence contentedly enough, though puzzled at our queer occupation.

And now the village. The first door is opened by a slatternly woman of unhealthy appearance. 'Come along, here's a pile for you', and she leads the young man round behind the house. He returns with a protest; there is enough to fill his cart from this house alone. It would mean an extra journey of two miles to the dump. Argument follows; we cannot take this accumulation of years, and though the old lady bids sixpence (two whole tickets) we are firm. She must make a special contract for the old heap, and deliver a three months' stock only to our cart. This is unwelcome. 'You see, we feed the baby on tinned milk, and my husband often has a tin of fish or something in the evening, and on Sunday we generally take sardines with our dinner.'

A few doors farther on there is a different story. 'I don't believe in these made-up foods; whatever we eat I cook myself, it's purer and fresher, not to say cheaper, and my daughter and her man think the same. Don't you, Rhoda?' (This over the fence, and answered by sounds of agreement). The tins and bottles have been sorted separately here for our convenience, and an old brass lamp, out of order, accompanies them, to the delight of the thrifty young carter. The load is full, and a journey to the dump must be made. A huge chasm beside a country road has been wisely approved for the purpose by the District Council, and will not be filled within the lifetime of this generation.

At the next cottage we have friction again; rags,

paper, sacking, etc., all burnable, are the refuse. Three days' work yields 37s., 148 tickets having been bought by 139 houses. Cart hire for three days costs 45s.; a loss of 8s. is better than last time, when we charged twopence. A District Council in Surrey charges 5s. per annum, or 5d. per month, and makes monthly collections; but we are a Rural Community Council, and should be able to operate more cheaply. Four calls in a year at 3d. each should not overtax the poorest budget, and when householders learn to have their rubbish ready and their cards in the windows on the day appointed, we shall save money and time.

For Countrymen and Countrywomen – 23

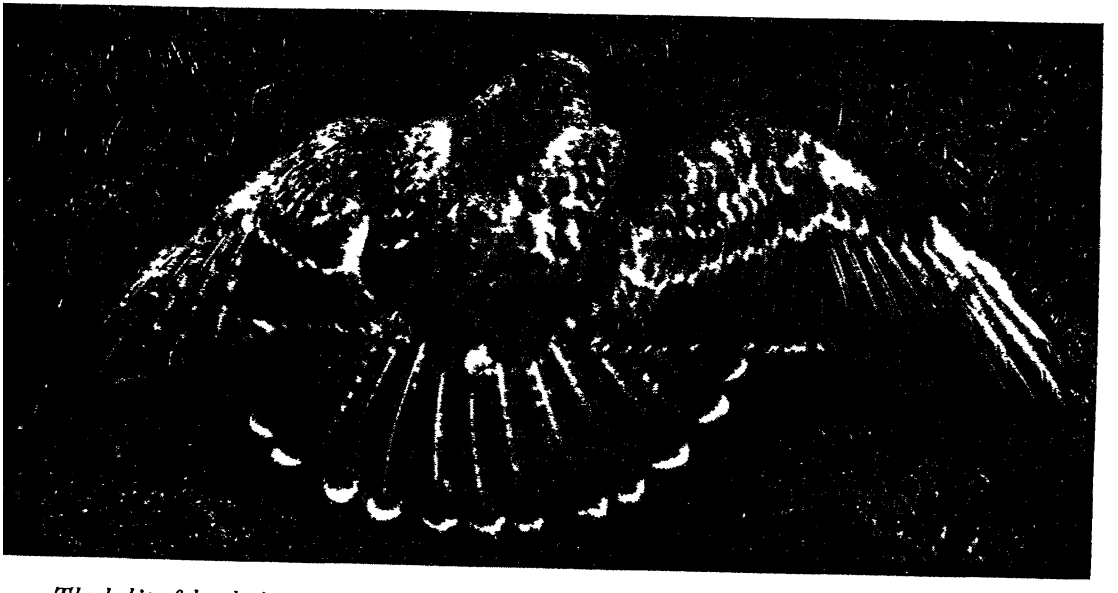
1. Does the scarlet runner twine clockwise or counter-clockwise? – 2. Who wrote that he had lost his editorship but his cow had calved as if nothing had happened? – 3. Name three places in southern England still protected by ancient earthworks? – 4. Of what poet was it said, and by whom, that his description of a cottage was like that of 'a person sent there to distrain for rent'? – 5. Who was the other poet who wrote 'urge the flying ball' when he meant cricket, and 'chase the rolling circle's speed' when he meant foot-ball? – 6. 'It is a curious fact, of which I can find no satisfactory explanation, that enthusiasm for country life and love of natural scenery are strongest and most widely diffused in those European countries which have the worst climate and where the search for the picturesque involves the greatest discomforts.' Author?

'IN July the flies leave the cows and sting the horses,' the horseman explained.

Incidents and Problems of Bird Life

THE Buzzard in Autumn. On still days from late August until March it is not unusual for as many as five of the great hawks to be circling slowly for hours, still-winged, and frequently at so great a height that they become lost to view among the cirrus clouds. Five buzzards represent an entire family, the old pair and three young birds. Sometimes two eggs only are laid, but the family party is occasionally reinforced by an odd bird or two, survivors of some domestic tragedy, so that as many as six or seven buzzards may be seen in company. Buzzards unquestionably pair for life, returning year after year to the same nesting-place until one or other comes to grief. Unlike the eagle or raven, the buzzard as a rule builds every year a new nest, usually in the loftiest crotch that will bear its weight. In England the range of the buzzard is mainly confined to the Lake District and the Cornish peninsula, but the bird occurs in many parts of Scotland and Wales, and would soon doubtless become somewhat plentiful in the British Isles if more efficiently protected. As matters now stand it is in face of difficulties that he holds his own in most of these circumscribed areas. So beautiful a bird is more than worth the slight damage he causes. Though at times he may commit depredations among game-birds or poultry, his principal food is small mammals and reptiles. He is particularly partial to young rabbits. Pheasants or partridges do not constitute his usual prey because his wings are too wide to follow them into the cover where they take refuge at his approach. Wood-pigeons are more frequently victims. Two buzzards have for years appropriated a small wood in the heart of my best partridge ground, but I have never found them disturbing or molesting the game. Buzzards are wide-ranging birds, and if an occasional covey of partridges may take fright at sight of broad wings overhead, or at sound of the wild wailing scream with which the big hawk is apt to announce his whereabouts partridges are as likely to be

THE BUZZARD WITH ITS PREY



The habit of hawks is to seize with the feet and to prevent the quarry escaping by spreading wings and tail as shown. Photograph by Captain C. W. R. Knight

driven on as off any particular beat. However that may be, I know many large game preservers who prize their buzzards as highly as their pheasants and partridges. For the benefit of readers unfamiliar with the buzzard I may mention that the average length is about twenty-two or twenty-three inches according to the sex, with a wing span which frequently exceeds three feet. The general hue above is dark brown, sometimes tinted with rich plum colour, but the pale buff and white under parts are particularly noticeable when the bird is in flight. – *Douglas Gordon*

SWALLOWS on the Ground. I have been particularly interested in a family of swallows which has come along daily – I am writing at the end of July – to a lawn I have had dug up. I have never before seen swallows feeding on the ground, mixing with sparrows and blackbirds. I noticed that my swallows experienced some difficulty in hopping about amongst upturned sods. – *J. W. H., Anglesey*

ON Hearing a Bird's Call. I was walking one winter morning on a lonely stretch of Surrey common, when I heard a bird's song which I could not recognize. I listened for perhaps half a minute, and then, completely puzzled, got out my glasses, cautiously drew nearer, turned the corner of a clump of trees and found a tiny cottage with a canary singing in the window. Canaries differ much in the range and quality of their song. But other birds do not differ so much, and I have wondered sometimes whether the various doubts and questions which arise in regard to the song and the calls of birds may not be due to an inability in the hearer to distinguish between songs slightly alike, or between the quality of one sound and another. For instance, every one familiar with the habits of birds knows that of the thrush family the song thrush, the missel thrush, the lark and the robin sing in autumn and winter, but that the blackbird does not. Yet every autumn there will be people to tell you that they have heard a blackbird singing, when the bird to

which they have been listening turns out to be a missel thrush. To a similar inability to distinguish quality of sound I attribute some of the difficulties of the question whether the spring 'drumming' of the greater and lesser spotted woodpeckers is a vocal sound or is made by the mechanical action of the bird hitting its beak rapidly against a piece of dead wood. I have asked, and have never yet received a reply to the question, how it happens – if the sound is produced mechanically and not, as I believe, in the bird's throat – that a woodpecker hammering on a dead oak branch produces a



THE SPARROW HAWK AND HER FAMILY
Described in the July COUNTRYMAN

sound totally different in quality from that of a nuthatch hammering at a nut. And an even more difficult question to answer – if the sound is produced mechanically – has seemed to me to arise in the account written by an acquaintance of mine describing the nesting of a pair of lesser spotted woodpeckers. He narrated how he had watched and listened to the male woodpecker hacking out the hollow of his nest in the stem of a dead pear tree, and how one day when the woodpecker had hacked out a sufficiently large hollow, it went into the hole and drummed. This seemed to me to prove conclusively that the sound was vocal, for the woodpecker had been hitting for some days the same wood on which it was supposed to drum. I asked how the woodpecker could produce two qualities of sound by hammering at the same piece of wood, and was told in reply that the bird had pecked out the soft core of the stem and was drumming on the hard shell! Here, surely, is a capital example of the differing capacity of different hearers to distinguish quality, as apart from mere loudness, of sound in a bird's call. – *E.P.*

A JACKDAW Burglar. On three successive mornings I rose to discover that fruit had been pulled from a dish on the sideboard, and scattered about the floor. On the fourth morning when I went into the room I saw a jackdaw perched on the sideboard. The windows were closed, so he must have come down the chimney. As he continued to peck at an apple, ignoring my presence, I sat down to watch him. He calmly finished his breakfast, preened himself, picked up what was left of the apple, flew to the fireplace, and went straight up the chimney! – *J. McC.*

Ø

THESE English! 'We're 500 miles from the railway, one other man on the station, and our nearest neighbours fifty miles off,' writes a reader in Africa, 'but we have a 9-hole golf course and a tennis court.'

My Island and Our Life There – 6

by R. M. Lockley

How *the author came into possession of an island off the Welsh coast, full of wild birds and flowers, how he found treasure trove in the wreck of an abandoned schooner; how, after building a house out of the wreck, he brought his bride – this having been told, Mr. Lockley records the experiences of himself, his wife and little daughter.*

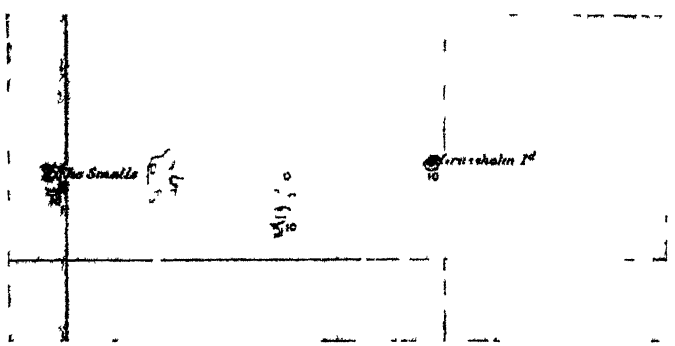
I HAVE to thank all those readers of THE COUNTRYMAN who took the trouble of writing to persuade me not to import cattle, plough land and start a general farm to the detriment of a fauna and flora which have evolved owing to the neglect of farming through many decades. 'We already have enough farms and they don't pay anyhow.' 'Don't plough up your lovely island, unless to plant thickets and spinneys for the birds.' And so on. It had seemed a shame to waste meadow grass of such cream-producing quality.



THE AUTHOR, HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER

A photograph taken at sea

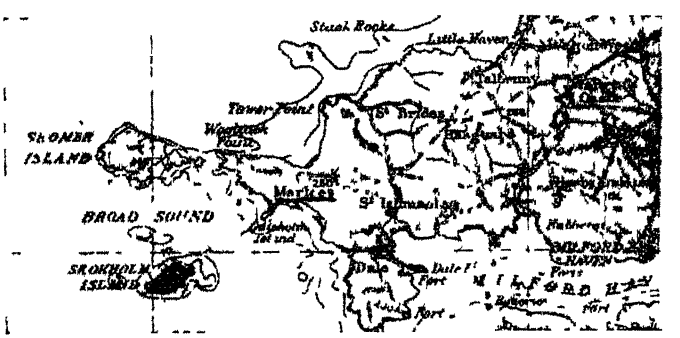
On Skomer Island there is a white cow which in clear weather is quite a landmark. After one first calving it has remained in milk every day for four years! Such is the sweetness of the grass and the mildness of the winter on these islands. Yet a cow would be the beginning of farming. We vacillated. Finally we gave up following the prices of cows and calves in the local marts. (Goodness knows they were low enough. Weaners were down to 3*s.* 6*d.* each, and in many markets were given away as too expensive to keep. Lambs were 4*d.* and mutton 2*d.* a pound live weight, for the slump has been felt most severely in the extreme west, away from consuming centres.) To all right-thinking persons the ultimate destiny of these bird-islands is that of perpetual nature-reserves. The other day a government official invaded us on a tour of inspection, a hopeful sign and there is at last a movement towards stopping bungaloid growths on the cliffs on the mainland. So our island remains a refuge and reserve for wild things and flowers. The sheep and rabbits will continue to nibble down the herbage and keep it at its best for the summer display of dwarf flowers – squill, milkwort, pansy, violet, pimpernels, thyme, thrift, stork's-bill crane's-foot, bird's-foot, and so many others. We had feared



MR. LOCKLEY'S ISLAND

that the doubling of the number of sheep would result in the trampling and eradication of the taller stuff, the bluebells, foxgloves, primroses, orchis, centaury, golden-rod: instead these have never flowered so finely as this summer. The bluebells, ranked purple and thick, by the rood and perch, are even improved; on a favourable wind their scent came a mile over the sea to greet us in the boat.

Cruise to the Nor'ard. Having explored every cranny on our own island and on the sister isles of Skomer and Grassholm, we have begun to rove. The roving instinct is almost impossible to resist in summer, and is one of the most powerful reasons for not keeping stock that needs daily attention. (If we must all be absent, the lightkeepers milk our goats and feed our hens.) Cruises are divided into categories. A grand cruise comes top of the scale, signifying a boat loaded with sleeping, cooking, writing and sketching paraphernalia – and our best milker Matilda, who enjoys these expeditions as we do. Truly 'doth she love new pasture, and the sampling of new herbes giveth constante delight'. She bleats if she happens to see us leaving the island without her, and anxiously leaps along the cliffs in an effort to follow us. Ashore, she follows our movements with equal tenacity,



AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

[*Reproduced by kind permission of the Ordnance Survey Office*

snatching hasty mouthfuls by the way and protesting if we go too quickly or at sundown begging for a crust, pushing her scraggy form between us at supper, her splendid beard imperilling the smoky soup of the camp fire. Yes, in manner and deportment Matilda reaches our hearts, and anyway we can't do without milk for Ann.

This then, is the account of our first sustained cruise to the nor'ard in September. It generally takes the whole morning to get packed into the boat and to leave affairs reasonably straight at home, so that, by the time we had spread the sail and got to Martynshaven we were ready for tea – and the accumulation of mail in our hut there. Thence eastwards to St. Bride's across the vast blue bay of that name, where we dropped anchor. As it was Sunday evening and the good folk were just out of church and met together for the weekly exchange of news, we did not stop long, but sailed a few miles northwards and brought up at sea under the lee of St. Bride's Stacks, a chain of high rocks rising out of the ocean like the fingers of the hand. Some fisherfolk long ago planted rings in the cliff here, so that we lay moored very easily that night, while Matilda grazed the noble crown of the highest Stack, which is remarkable for a great growth of sea tree-mallows. I think the seals must breed here for they kept us awake most of the night with soulful laments. It was so warm and windless and pleasant the next day that we were almost motionless, writing, sketching, and watching birds and seals. We took Ann for walks on the biggest Stack (1/5th acre), and shifted Matilda on to another, the succulent grass of which she had eyed across the dividing gulf like a child before a baker's window. On the third day a south-west zephyr made sailing possible and the tea having mysteriously disappeared – Ann suspect who had lately taken to experimenting to find out what will float and what will sink – we entered Little Haven under canvas, bought necessaries and filled up water. But there were too many visitors there and at Broad Haven, so we left just as a crowd

was beginning to assemble to admire Matilda. Northwards off Newgale Sands, we encountered great flocks of sea-ducks, scoters by their blackness. So to Solva harbour for tea and a bathe. From here on towards St. Davids we fished with lines, motor dead slow, the wind having failed entirely in the evening. Late at night we hauled up with block and tackle on the pebbles in the deserted vale of Carbwdy, and slept in a little empty hut we found there, the only evidence of human beings in this remote place. Next morning we washed in the stream as scores of yellow-hammers in the furze droned about bread and cheese. For these commodities we sailed for Ramsey Island. But when we beached on the pebbles in the south harbour there we found everyone absent on the mainland. However, being ravenous, we managed well enough with the fish we had caught, fried with a turnip out of the field. Matilda, thinking she was home again, wandered for miles over this great island and didn't come back until long after dark. We slept in the flowering heather under canvas, after helping the slightly surprised returned farmer to haul up his boat. The next day we climbed both the great twin hills of Ramsey. From the highest of these Grassholm appears to be in mid-ocean instead of, as we see it from Skokholm, on the horizon. The nearer isles and coasts spread map-like below our eagle's perch. For such it is, being the home of the solitary golden eagle which, dispossessed, wheeled magnificently, like an outsize buzzard, high above us. This eagle is the survivor of a pair released years ago on Skomer, which, when its mate was shot by some ignoramus, emigrated to these crags. We saw him later sitting on a stone wall waiting for a rabbit. He allowed us to approach within twenty paces before barking like an angry dog and stretching his great pinions in flight. (Owing to alleged depredations among the farmer's lambs this bird has since been shot, too.)

Our pace afoot is limited by what Ann can do, so we stop much and look at birds and flowers, so discovering more



SUN HEALTH TOURS

IF Midsummer, 1932, be memorable for nothing else, it will be recalled as a vintage period of sunshine. But the year is mellowing The evenings will soon be drawing in with autumnal chill. Then the dark days and the depths of winter! How to escape them?

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wonders than by breathless sight-seeing. Our peregrination of Ramsey took two days. After this we went over to the lifeboat station at Porth Stinian, from where I walked to St. David's for more food and letters – for we were eating like wolves. We had intended to camp on the North Bishop Rock, far at sea, west of St. David's Head, but a slight swell had come on to prevent that, and we also learnt that there was a letter from relatives waiting for us at Marloes. Nothing remained therefore but to spread the sails for home before the north wind and get rid of our paraphernalia before fetching them to our island. We made by moonlight the most beautiful passage we have ever experienced, the bay luminous and full of shearwaters, homing like ourselves. Presently Jack Sound opened, and with it we saw afar off in the south-west the red flash which by night signifies home to us. Warm and snug in her cot, and sent to sleep by the swaying of the boat and the gentle lapping at the bow, Ann saw nothing of it. Nor, when we landed and carried her to the house, did she wake to see the toy waggon which, in our absence, some anonymous visitor had left on the doorstep for her.

Travel Ashore. Spring-dipping of ewes, lambing, tailing and cutting, washing, shearing, dipping of all; then many sprinklings before the last autumn dip, and finally the boating of the lamb-crop before introducing the rams on November 1: these are the great occasions of shepherding on the island. The summer grass is abundant from June to October, would fatten half a thousand sheep then as well as the normal crop of four thousand rabbits, but growth of herbage is slow after October when the salt gales scorch the pastures; therefore we endeavour to finish boating the lambs to the mainland in September. When the crop was small in earlier years I used to bring them out all at once, steadily ferrying them – the 'Storm Petrel' holds twelve comfortably – until finished. I 'lonkered' them (local term for hobbled) and grazed them on Marloes Mere, a stretch of moor belonging to a friendly

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farmer. A hundred years ago this place was common land where the smallholding-fisherman and villagers grazed their cattle in summer. Leeches were then in demand, and a thriving trade resulted from their collection by the Marloese from the several ponds of the Mere. Now it is furze- and heather-grown, wild-duck, plover, and snipe-haunted, inundated in severe rains, as wild a place for my lambs as the island they were born on, for on one side it is bounded by vast sea-cliffs on the promontories of which the Vikings and probably the pirates of much earlier days have left their earthworks and eyries. Here, while I haggle with the local butchers and dealers, my lambs roam, and for a week at least, enjoying the change of herbage, do not lose weight. Hobbling, however, soon takes away their primeness. The local dealers know they have me at their mercy, know that I must sell quickly, and they talk prices accordingly. In the first week last year I managed to get top price from an eager buyer, but a fortnight later the rest went at an unfavourable figure. The only part of this business I ever enjoyed was the daily tallying of the sheep from out of the old ramparts and earthworks, the furze-grown bottoms, and about the jewelled pools of the wind-swept Mere. Once, refusing to sell cheaply, I kept them there for a month and they got 'heffed' enough to stay there without 'lonkers'.

In every way the producer on this remote coast is in the hands of the middleman. Take the latest prices as I write in July, 1932. Lamb made 7*d.* a pound and was sold for 1*s.* 2*d.* My lobsters fetch 1*s.* a pound and are sold the same day in Tenby for 2*s.* 2*d.*! Crabs at 3*d.* are sold for 1*s.* a pound in that expensive town, and at not much less elsewhere. So with rabbits in the winter. The local dealer paid 3½*d.* and got 6*d.* a pound. So this year we vowed we'd be independent of the easy-profit gentlemen. We'd get a van and run all our produce to Haverfordwest, sending the fish and rabbits to all-devouring Birmingham, and taking our lambs to any open mart in this or the next county, where

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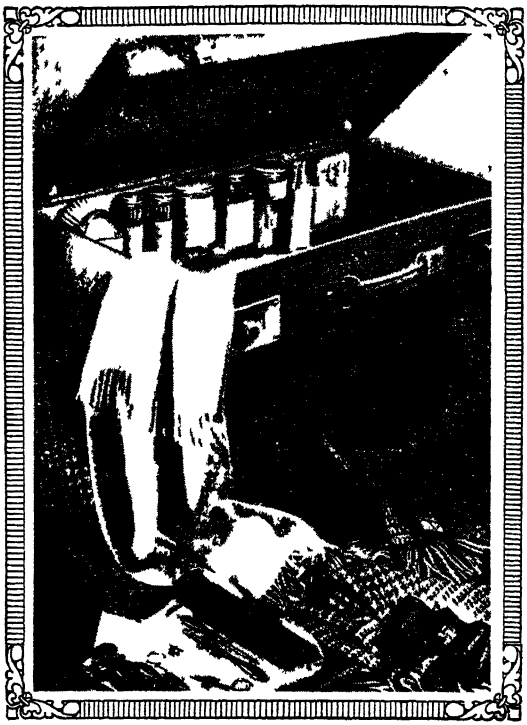
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at least they would be competed for at something like their fair value. That's how we now possess a Morris Minor 8 h.p. 5 cwt. van and wouldn't be without it for worlds. It holds three boxes of fish easily, or any number of rabbits, or six lambs (I travelled nine once but they were breathing down my neck and pressing the self-starter).

It was quite an adventure taking the first half-dozen lambs to the mart. In front Ann sat on Doris's lap, I was at the wheel, while the six lambs stood on bracken quietly enough behind us. As we bumped over the Pembrokeshire lanes, the lambs with their rumps were gradually easing up the rear doors' lever, and on the first big hill the doors flew wide. Out the lambs began to spring, and so did I, slamming the doors in time to save two. One cleared the hedge, and, running headlong down a meadow, took a small brook with a wild jump which fixed it permanently in some branches on the other side, from which I was easily able to rescue it. The other three, Doris, and Ann, kept on the road and persuaded into a corner, to which I presently backed the van, and reloaded them. Then I tied down the door-lever. The lambs were muddy from the adventure, but having come straight from the island, were fat, and fetched the highest price at the mart that day. We were all smiles; the van would pay for its instalments at this rate.

So much for the commercial side. We use the van in other ways, having a comprehensive licence marked 'goods and private'. Having gazed so long at that vast, surf-circled continent of Pembrokeshire, which from the island we see occupying the whole of our eastern horizon, with the blue slopes of Precelly Top beyond, the three of us sometimes make flying visits before the gale to her shores, and taking the road, seek out some new corner or castle or ruined palace in this country of the Fleming. Carew, Upton, Manorbier, Benton, Martletwy, Stackpole Elidor, Bosherston, Castlemartin, are a few. When the keepers were snug in their lodges we have crept, with the daws and

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the high wind unobserved, into the roofless palace of the bishops at Lamphey, into the gloomy vaults of mighty Lawhaden fortress. Woods are a great treat and refuge for us. By degrees we shall make our perambulation of Pembrokeshire, so that the high cliff line shall no longer seem to hide great wonders and enchantments from our eyes. The spell will be broken and there will be less willingness to roam out of sound of the cries we hear every day and love and miss most, the incessant mewing of the gulls.

From an October Log-Book. Monday. Up early and took what is to be the last load of fish we shall ever sell to the dealers, by boat to Milford. Henceforth we sell direct to the consuming market. We took our time and made it a holiday by calling at Sandy Haven, running aground just before lunch and low water, in order to visit Captain Cristal and his amiable wife. They came up the Haven with us. Home to the island late, after tea on Sandy Haven quay at high water.

Tuesday. Made a last cruise to Grassholm, sea very calm and sun very hot. The gannets nearly all fledged. We counted seventy-four great grey seals lying along the rocks, basking at low-water. One looked remarkably like the rare harp-seal. They appeared to be of a great variety of the richest blues, browns, greys and piebalds. The air being laden with moisture from recent sea-fogs, the whole scene was very beautiful, the seals' bodies being outlined with a glistening iridescence as if they were wrapped in rainbowed silk. Westwards, far at sea, the red-and-white bands of the Smalls lighthouse were floating in the undefined cloud which hid the horizon, seeming closer than usual, while, nearer us the Barrels rock lay awash, rotund, cleaving the furious current which streamed southwards past it. There were many migrants, including a passing heron, who looked akin to the gannets with his great wings and spear-like beak; but while they soared and planed with effortless ease, he laboured along with ponderously beating fans. Coming back



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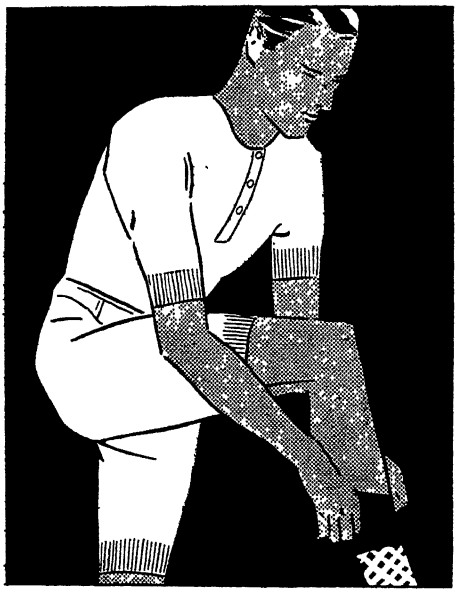
north of Skomer we fished with lines off the Rye Rocks, and so to bed at Martynshaven hut, having business ashore on the morrow.

Friday. A day of mishaps. Business completed we pushed off into a rough sea stirred by the north wind blowing down across the bay straight into the haven. I timed our push-off badly, thinking a good 'smooth' had arrived, but the small waves turned to breakers and nearly swamped us. There was no turning back so I jumped into the sea up to my shoulders and pushed her clear; then we rowed up to a fisherman's buoy for Doris to hold on while I bailed, the boat being a foot deep in water, and Ann's little compartment quite soaked. I had scarcely begun to bail when we found the buoy dragging, for the wind was rapidly increasing, and we were almost on the beach again. We pulled up to another buoy, which also dragged, but I had time to finish bailing and start the engine. All well then, and a fine sail home before the wind until it came to unloading in South Haven, when in carrying the engine out of the boat I slipped on the landing-steps, and fell into the sea, this time going over my head. Luckily Doris had a hand on the engine, and I managed to drop it on the steps in time, or we might have lost that too. Result, a few dents, not serious; moral, wear tacks on your rubbers and have a safety-chain on the engine. Rest of day drying and dozing in the sun and inspecting sheep.

Saturday. Marvellously still and windless. The comparative silence impressive after the noise and bustle of summer, and the winds of yesterday, for the gulls have dwindled to a few dozen young and adult herring and great black-back gulls. Robins are the noisiest now, singing all day along the south and east cliffs and around the buildings. Wrens are here again and many starlings; also little owls, chiffchaffs, swallows, and a strong remnant of wheatears still. All day carting the dry turf (for firing) to shelter for the winter.

Sheep and Goats. Years ago I could scarcely believe the saying that a shepherd knows each sheep by its face, but now

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Soon every wall will be sheltering its huddled bunch of cattle. But we shall not shelter . . . in the teeth of the nor' easter we shall exult. Such glorious confidence Morley winter-weights can give.

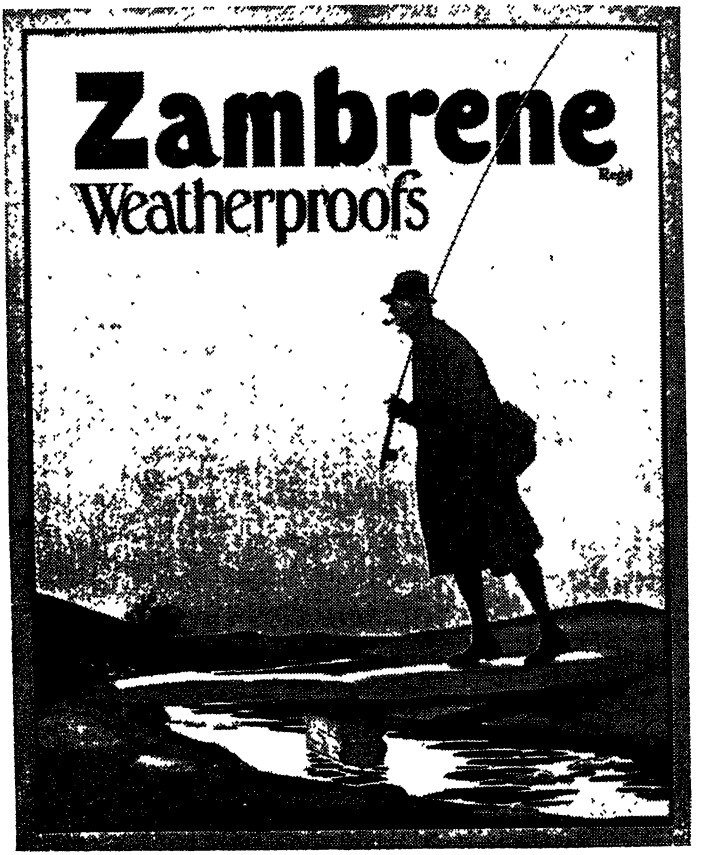
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I find it easy to tell each one of my flock. It is all the more easy in a cross-bred flock such as mine, because most of the faces are distinctively marked. The goats never mingle with the sheep; they not only ignore, but never seem even to 'look towards' one another. If we are rounding up both, the goats will range at a distance from the sheep, or occasionally they will be in the midst of them, but always with a wide space made around them. I think that the goats dislike the sheep more than the sheep the goats; at any rate they appear to avoid them more deliberately, though this may be because goats are so much more active. As for milk, we can rely on Matilda for a half-gallon of milk a day from March to September, the supply dwindling until she becomes dry by the New Year, though once her lactation period extended for eleven months. Katherine, a year younger, gives a pint a day less, while Biquette, younger still, gives slightly less again. On the whole I find these figures compare favourably with results from goats kept on the mainland. Probably the range accounts for this, goats being naturally at home on rocky pastures. Our goats are fawn-coloured, and though not pure Toggenburg, they have the pretty white face- and body-marks of that breed. There are three black-and-white Welsh nannies at the lighthouse, hardy natives with sweeping horns and long coats, which actually milk slightly better than ours. The two tribes meet each day on the bog, and after wandering about together for an hour as if exchanging small talk (there is a good deal of bleating at meeting), they usually disperse and gradually, though, alas! not invariably, work their way home to their respective stalls by 7 p.m., milking time.

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A MATCH IN TIME. – I was walking along a country road with a yeoman friend when we saw a crumpled sheet of newspaper. My friend at once stopped and, with a match, set fire to it. He said he had always made this his practice.– *Warwickshire*



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Farm Notebooks— 1. *From an Old Farmer*

This quarter we preface our young farmer's notes with some iottings by an old hand, a working farmer who is one of the most successful agriculturists in England

IT is no doubt true, as Miss Ashby, the clever sister of an able agricultural economist, says, that the child of the average small-holder is more intelligent than the child of the average labourer. But what would the position be if you suddenly increased the number of small-holdings without increasing the market for their produce? . . . A heavy storm of wind and rain on June 30 knocked a 20-acre field of wheat as flat as if it had been rolled, but the ears were soon looking up straight, though the straw was still flat; I had had hopes of the local prize for the best field of growing wheat. But we have entered for the farm competition and hope to regain the cup. Our success is doubtful as the judges are men with whom the folding of sheep is a religion! I was to have had a debate with a pro-sheep man but he has cried off on the ground that he would not waste his time on a fool! . . . My direct power drive grasscutter, drawn by a tractor, is quite one of the most valuable innovations of recent years. . . . I am not pleased with the experiment of sowing spring barley in the autumn in this district, where our winters are usually mild, although I know good results are got in Essex. Here the danger is that the wheat may get winter proud, and then it never yields well. . . . We are now getting out the foundations of another Dutch barn or rather an extension to an existing one. This will give us a barn 105 ft. long by 60 ft. wide. We already have five Dutch barns, besides several of timber and slate. Thatching is expensive and wasteful. A tremendous amount of damage must be done to hay and corn ricks by rain before thatching and by leaky thatch. I have no patience with the people who say that Dutch barns are

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hideous and get rapturous over a tumbledown hovel, provided it is thatched, and has a few roses growing alongside it. We'll grow roses over our Dutch barns . . . As I have 27 labourers I take the lively labourer's paper, the 'Land Worker', and come on this story. A labourer took over a garden that had been neglected. By hard work he had made it a picture. The parson came along and said, 'Ah, Jones, it's wonderful what God can do in a garden, with a little help.' 'Yes', said Jones, 'but you should ha' seen it last year, when He had it Hisself' . . . Never before have I found so many men asking for work who obviously want it, although they may not be altogether suited to farm work. The men have included miners, street workers, shipyard workers, ex-service men and building operatives. I hear there are 300 skilled carpenters out of work in Portsmouth alone . . . Seeing our need of rural housing, I have been hoping that the local authority would build a considerable number of much needed cottages, but I am afraid the Ministry of Health will hold us up . . . We have this year increased the number of our laying hens to 3,000, as properly managed poultry pay better than anything else. We are trying out a new system of housing. The houses are small with a run attached to each, to hold 35 to 40 hens, and they are moved every other day. The birds are kept confined to the runs. The advantages are that you have control over the birds, while they get entirely fresh ground and the manure is spread evenly. We don't yet know all the disadvantages of the system, but we find some feather-eating . . . At the Imperial Chemical Industries' Jealotts Hill farm I was particularly interested in experiments from which it seemed to me proved that, by management alone, the type and quality of herbage could be entirely altered. I was of this opinion. I have seen, on soils varying as widely as the very rich Romney Marsh and the light chalky downs in Sussex, enormous differences in adjoining pastures separated only, perhaps, by a barbed wire fence or a ditch. On one side good

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enough to fatten a bullock, on the other bad enough to starve a donkey, the difference being due entirely to management . . . I went with a friend to the farm of Mr. Hosier, whose method of keeping cows out on the open downs is remarkably successful. Two men look after and milk 60 cows quite comfortably. There is no doubt that Mr. Hosier has solved the problem of producing milk cheaply. Unfortunately those of us who farm wet or heavy land could not successfully adopt the system. It appeared to me an example of how a man with the 'flexible mind' that Sir Daniel Hall talks about can adopt a new principle of farming with considerable success – and profit, not always the same thing . . . At the last meeting of our local district Council one member spoke 38 times and at the previous meeting 42 times!

2. *From a Young Farmer*

June. This has been the first month of 1932 in which we have had normal weather. Warm, bright days, following the copious rains of May, gave us a hay-crop exceeding expectations, though being quick-grown, it shrank rapidly in the swathe and proved tricky to handle. A fine June generally produces hot ricks, but by the use of salt and a little discretion we have had no trouble so far . . . Though the plough may in time be superseded as a producer of tilth, it seems doubtful whether any better implement will be found for destroying deep-rooted weeds such as thistles. Besides the teams, we have had a tractor in to break up some of the dirtier leys. Apart from the great advantage of having land ready for autumn sowing in good time, the benefits of summer working are too substantial to be foregone for the sake of a doubtful second-cut of hay, worth less than a pound a ton. Mangels and potatoes promise extraordinarily well, though whether this is due to the deep ploughing or the liberal dose of fertilisers is hard to say. After a wet May they are, however, extremely dirty, and mean much labour.

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July. Seven nice ricks should winter us quite comfortably if only we can realize on some of the stock. Our heifers are calving nicely, with little trouble beyond a cut teat, but the markets are overcrowded with dairy-cattle which no one seems to want. Down here the arrival of the holiday-season usually brings out the dairyman's cheque-book; but apparently the seasonal visitor is being replaced by motorists and day-trippers, both of whom bring their own meals with them. The statistics show our national dairy-herd to have reached record dimensions . . . Our sowings this month were limited to a few swedes and a small piece of lucerne. There must be good reasons for the relative scarcity of this crop in a district apparently well suited to it. Likely explanations are the bacterial problem (though this has now been solved by Rothamsted), and the difficulty of keeping the young crop free from weeds.

August. We have been lucky with our harvest weather, and seldom has fine weather been more needed. At midsummer the corn promised well, but wind and rain set to work before the binder, and few fields in the south had the bright, upstanding appearance of a good crop. Many fields are too hopeless even for the scythe, and will have to be 'fagged out' with hooks. On the whole, we have come off lightly, our only really bad patches being the sites of the sheep-troughs last autumn. Tradition invariably upholds the virtues of the 'golden hoof', and shepherds shake their heads when their charges are transferred from arable to grassland; but close-folding absorbs an incredible amount of labour, and fertility can be too dearly bought, especially in seasons when the fertilised crop suffers for its own luxuriance. Our main lot of roots went in at the beginning of the month; rather late, perhaps, but they came away well. They will be a weird mixture of turnips, rape and kail, but the field is poor and chalky, and any sort of food is welcome in midwinter.

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Bench, Council and Committee

THE Autocracy of the Chief Constable. In more than one county I find some anxiety concerning the autocratic demeanour of the chief constable. This functionary's relationship with his county council is sometimes far from satisfactory. An illustration of the power of the chief constable is to be found in the working of the Police (Appeals) Act of 1927. Under this Act every constable who is dismissed, or, as not infrequently happens, is compelled to resign, has the right of appeal to the Home Secretary. Since the passing of the Act there have been 85 appeals. No fewer than 66 were dismissed without enquiry. Some 18 were dismissed after enquiry. One only was allowed. The successful appellant was a chief constable. There is an impression prevalent that the department of the Home Office dealing with the police has not made the same progress as, say, the prisons department. – *J.M.D.*

ENDORSING Dog Licences. The suggestion I made in the House of Lords has found favour in many quarters. It will be remembered that Lord Kinnoull brought to the notice of the House the case of a brute who was guilty of unspeakable cruelty to his dog and asked that such a man should be refused a licence for another dog. The official mind declared that this was administratively impossible. I did not understand why, and suggested that such a man's licence should be endorsed and he should be made to present his licence before he could obtain another. (This might involve everybody with a dog licence having to send it in at the end of the year before a fresh one was issued. This would surely be no very great trouble or hardship.) If the offender referred to went to another district and pretended he was taking out a dog licence for the first time he could even then be caught if his name were blacklisted in all the licence-issuing offices in the country. I do not suppose there are many of these

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THAT was our attitude when, in 1905, this business was organized on its present lines as Cleaners and Dyers of articles sent by post. Not that we had any doubt of 'arriving.' On the contrary — people were only too anxious to find a cleaning and dyeing house to whom they could trust the clothes and furnishings they valued most. But we felt resigned to a slow growth — content to let good work speak for itself and to increase our clientele through the personal recommendations of our customers to their friends.

Observe how right we were: and yet how wrong. First, how right. Personal recommendation has certainly pulled its weight. There were 15 workers at Hawick 27 years ago — now there are over 300. Then how pleasantly wrong. Growth has been surprisingly rapid — exceeded our expectations, in fact: our clientele has reached the 100,000 mark.

Lastly, the arrival is at least as pleasant as the journey was. Hardly a day passes without a gratifying pile of letters arriving at Hawick expressing appreciation of our cleaning and dyeing — and we should be churlish indeed if such kindness failed to sweeten our lot.

*

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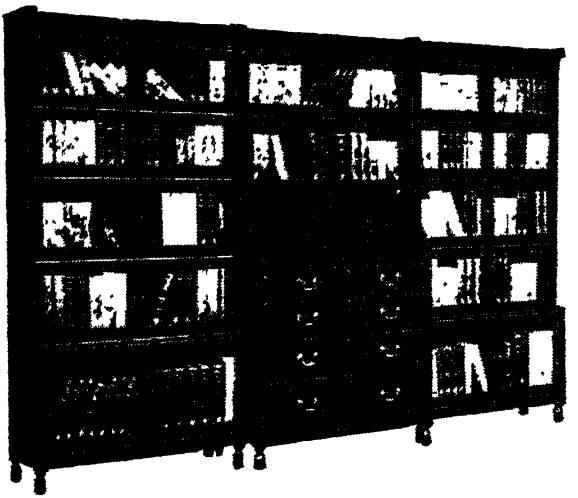
blackguards, and the list could therefore be kept without much trouble. Perhaps simpler methods might be found, but the official mind is not inventive. – *Ponsonby*

ANTI-LITTER Activity. Taking a leaf out of the book of the Worcestershire women's institutes, the Gloucestershire C.P.R.E. has organized an Anti-litter League. There is no subscription; members simply promise (1) not to litter and (2) to strengthen public opinion against littering. Miss C. Holt, Holcombe House, Minchinhampton, Hon. Sec., will no doubt be glad to send a copy of her ingenious postcard to readers minded to do as is being done in Gloucestershire. At week-ends on Minchinhampton Common there are wardens who beg people not to litter. Just what a countryman wants to know about the control of litter, etc., is contained in a compendium (3½*d.* from the C.P.R.E., 17 Great Marlborough Street, London, W.1) called 'Powers and Duties of Local Authorities in connection with Rural Amenities.' – *D.S.P.*

PISÉ de Terre. Readers of THE COUNTRYMAN interested in cheap building should study the noteworthy results obtained with this substance by Hugh's Settlement, Quarley, Hants. It was at first believed that the chalk, sufficiently reduced in size, and moistened, needed to be rammed between shutters. It was soon found that ramming was unnecessary. A mechanical means of pulverization has been adopted, and blocks of varying sizes instead of building in situ in shutters, are being used. Costs are estimated at 8*d.* per cubic foot against 11*d.* and 1*s.* 1*d.*, the local rate for brick work. Other site-materials than chalk may be used on the pisé de terre principle. – *L.S.*



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Hiking and Spiking

TOWARDS evening, as it looked like rain, the man who had induced me to go hiking with him suggested 'spiking' it that night. 'They are hot on the searching,' he said; 'put your tobacco and matches in your boots.' Within twenty minutes of going in we had a bath, and had our supper of bread and skilly in bed. The following morning we were given our breakfast of bread and skilly at seven. We were supposed to stop in the whole of that day to chop wood. But as soon as breakfast was over my companion whispered, 'I know the way out, come on.' We scaled a wall and made off across the fields. Within a couple of miles of Sandwich he said, 'I've got an idea; we'll start tipping.' 'Tipping what?' I asked. 'Horses. Pick out a race with a few runners in it – say five runners – and tip one in five different parts of the town. Next day we go to the place where we tipped the winner; sell all the tips we can, and clear off to the next town.' One day after working this scheme my resourceful companion was frying bacon in a wood when two women approached us. 'Got a drop of tea to spare?' one asked. 'Yes, come and sit down,' replied my pal cheerily. The lady he gave me wore a fur coat and high-buttoned boots. Both were on the road – pea-picking, they said. That night they were going into the spike, and so were we. It appears that married couples were discharged from the spike immediately after breakfast, and do not have to spend the day there working. So we decided to go in as two married couples. Next morning I was sitting with the others after breakfast when the porter called me aside. 'It's no good you waiting to get your discharge,' he said; 'you'll be here for another three weeks.' 'But – ' I gasped, 'why?' 'Your wife gave birth to a boy, two o'clock this morning; you can't go out and leave her here'! – *A.D.D.*

Ø

OVERHEARD at a country bus office. Old lady, to the conductor: 'A return from up yonder and down.'

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Rural Authors

23. *Adrian Bell and A. G. Street*

MANY novelists have done virtuously in picturing rural life as it really is, but Adrian Bell and A. G. Street excel them all in describing truthfully days in and days out on a farm. Townsfolk are very fortunate in being provided with books of the information and quality of *Corduroy* (1930), *Silver Ley* (1931) and *The Cherry Tree* (1932) by the one author and *Farmer's Glory* (1932) by the other. The three first books have the special attraction that they relate the experiences of a young man who takes his way into agriculture from London. *Farmer's Glory* is also the record of the experiences of a young man, but a young man born on a farm who furnishes a narrative of experiences in Canada as well as Wiltshire. The townsman reader naturally wants to know about books like these four not only whether they faithfully reflect farm life but to what extent they are a



ADRIAN BELL



A. G. STREET

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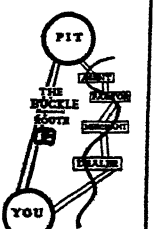
record of the authors' own experience. Adrian Bell is a real name like A. G. Street, now a welcome name on the Wireless. In a letter which he will not, we think, mind our reproducing, Bell has given the following convincing account of his rural life and writing.

'The main trend of my experience is contained in my three books, but the characters are types and not real people. I meant them to be a group representative of East Anglian agriculture. I was nineteen when I first went on a farm – a year after I left school. The year had been spent in an attempt to start as a journalist in an office (not from choice but for a livelihood). My health failed and the open air was suggested. I jumped at the idea, having the usual "romance" notion of life on the land. In time I learned its real meaning and deeper beauty. I forget now, but I probably disliked the work at first – but there was little time in the rhythm of work on the farm for likes or dislikes, and when I woke up again to the question of a livelihood at the end of a year's apprenticeship I found that the roots of my being were already in the soil. My part of the country has been the hardest hit by economic circumstances, and whereas I didn't lose so much, perhaps, as some arable farmers have done, having a relatively small holding, I did not make anything the last few years. With wheat at £1 a sack, accounts just balanced leaving nothing for interest on capital. When it went lower and the maxim "down corn, up horn" no longer applied, I sold my farm and took a small cottage with a large garden in the neighbourhood. There I am now living. Two reasons contributed to this: I love to meddle with the soil, and my heart is not in "prairie farming" or mass-produced poultry, or any of its modern mechanized branches which turn the labourer off the land. The prowess of hand labour was to me half the joy of the life and its meaning. Also, as I have lived in the country, other aspects of nature than farming have increasingly attracted me, so much so that they have been a hindrance to my farming on

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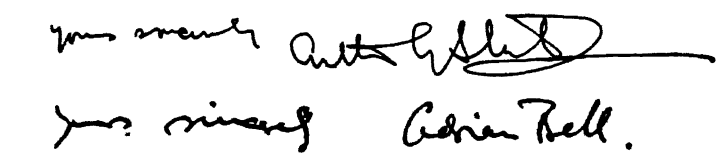
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occasion – one has little time to turn aside and watch hedge-row happenings in the rush of harvest! This is a development hinted at at the end of *The Cherry Tree*. Now my large square cottage garden is to me what my farm was – it is just that spade takes the place of plough. I can still turn the earth to good purpose and live in the rotation of the seasons as was my wont; and I can look my fill at what, for want of a better word, is termed "nature". But then I'm probably by nature a cottager, a small-holder – a "little man"! As for writing, I really wrote nothing but a country article or two before *Corduroy*. The Londoner, I am glad to say, seemed to like *Corduroy*, judging from letters I received from the metropolis. But then I think at heart he is a real nature lover, and London often just his job.' Bell is now living in Cambridgeshire.

A. G. Street, in his turn, writes as follows – his farm is not far from Salisbury: 'I am at present farming about 300 acres of land here, 90 of which are down land. I keep about 85 cows, which are all milked on the open-air system, with the exception of some half dozen which are still milked by hand by my old dairyman, the George Strong in *Farmer's Glory*. He takes on any casualties, cut teats, etc., cows which I do not want to go to the bull again, as the bull runs with the outdoor herd, and anything which gives trouble on the milking machine in any way. Milk is separated



SIGNATURES OF A. G. STREET AND ADRIAN BELL
Students of handwriting will be interested in the remarkable similarity between the two Yours sincerelys

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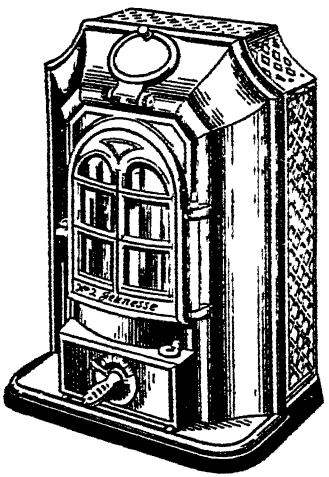
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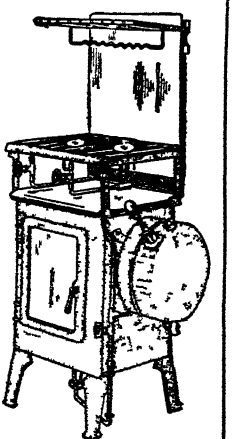
for cream for my retail business. The farming system is uninteresting, but any boredom in consequence is dispersed by the cares, pleasures, and humour obtained in the retailing of 150 gallons of milk daily. There are only four and a half acres of arable land; four are into wheat this year for thatch for hayricks, and the remaining half acre is put into the men's potatoes and my own. We have only one farm horse, and he has not seen an oat or slept in a stable for four years, but lives out of doors all the year, and waits on the cows' needs. The hay is cut and swept by a tractor with a power drive 7-feet cut mower and a home-made hay sweep, and the tractor is further used to move the milking outfit onward each day and from field to field. The pastures are improving rapidly each year from the treading of the cows, and the manurial value of the cake and hay fed on them, as by the open air system none of the urine is wasted. The book was suggested to me by Miss Edith Olivier, who saw a description of the joys of ploughing, which was printed as a short article in our local weekly paper. She asked me if I had read Adrian Bell's *Corduroy*, and suggested that, as that was the story of simple farming happenings, told from a townsman's point of view, the story of the change in farming methods in my district, told from the inside by a farmer, would make an interesting book. I got started with it, and soon became interested enough myself to determine to finish it. Most of it was written late at night in bed after the struggles of haymaking in the wet summer of 1931. I used to scribble in pencil until I became sleepy, and then chuck the pad and pencil overboard, put out the light, and sleep. Each morning, including Sundays, I rose at 4.30 a.m., and drove to a neighbour's farm some five miles distant to fetch some Grade A.T.T. milk, which had been bottled that morning, as I was under contract to deliver the same to my retail customers in Salisbury before 7 a.m. I found that my last waking thought of the night before was in my mind on these journeys, and during this early morning trip

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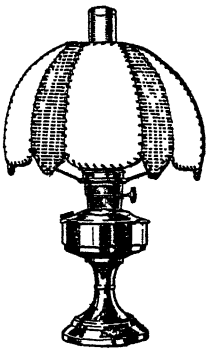
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the next chapter got sketched out. On wet days, and there were plenty, I used to type out what I had got scribbled, so that I had something that I could read and correct. The book got done somehow between May 1 and July 14. I was too lazy and tired to type the fair copy out, so this was done at a typing agency in Salisbury, and the MS. went up to the publisher about the first week in August. Prior to this I had the opportunity of meeting Mr. R. H. I. de la Mare of Fabers' at Miss Olivier's house towards the end of May, when I had a rough draft of about four chapters done. He read these and advised me to finish the book, saying that if I could keep up the same standard for about 80,000 words, he felt sure his firm would publish it. I think that is about all I can tell. I don't know anything of this writing business at all. The book was never planned, and no skeleton chapters were sketched out before writing. It was written as though I were writing a long letter to an intimate friend, and sometimes I can hardly believe that what has happened recently can be true; I feel that the whole thing is an immense joke. I do all the books of my retail business myself, and my mail of late has contained some curious contrasts. I open one letter from a reader who tells me how much he has enjoyed the book, another one contains a request to go and speak somewhere or other on the farming outlook, and a third is perhaps a vicious complaint from a customer in this strain, "Dear Sir, Your roundsman forgot to leave me the cream ordered yesterday for this morning, etc. etc." The farmer-milkman-author then goes to his desk and tries to compile three letters to fit the various cases, wondering what will happen next.' Street will have another book out by the time this issue of THE COUNTRYMAN is published. The farming period is 1918-32.

'BASKET' – This used to be the local word for children born out of marriage. 'It do run in the family; my Mary wor a "basket", and I wor a "basket", and my mother, she wor a "basket" afore me!' – *H.I.*

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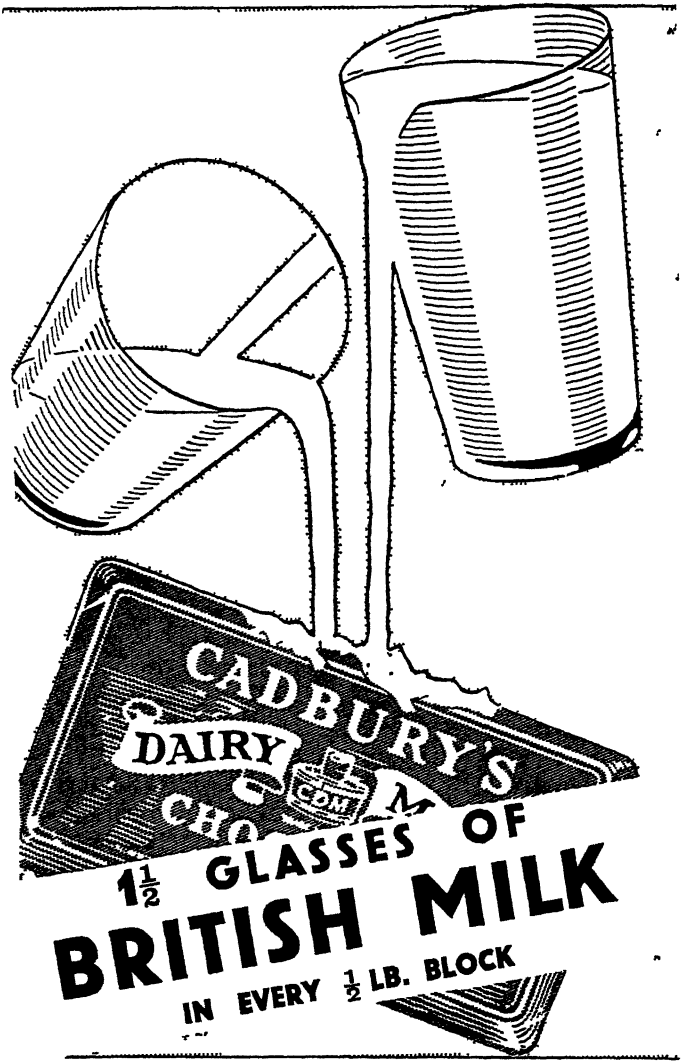
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Country House Catering — II. *The Pike*

by An Innkeeper's Daughter

THE way of a person who advocates English cookery is hard. First, I am told 'England has no cookery', 'no one really dines', that what is cooked is 'dull, heavy and stodgy'. When the libels have been successfully fought and English cookery has become fashionable, I, personally, am accused of being 'epicurean'. The truth is that the English Folk Cookery crusade is not merely a gastronomic movement, it is essentially economic in its origins. Its founder, who has personally tested twenty-eight ways in which girls and women can earn a living came to the conclusion that domestic service (resident domestic service) is by far the best, happiest and most remunerative – given employers who play the game. She worked for six years in cap and apron in other people's homes in every capacity from general servant, daily and resident, up to cook-housekeeper, head of a staff of ten. During this period she did every kind of housework from cleaning windows and doorsteps to washing clothes and scrubbing floors, making and baking bread, milking cows, making butter, paunching hares, and cutting up half a carcase of Canterbury lamb and making the best and most economical use of it. And her one regret is that she is too old to do the work now. Of course, English cookery, properly done is epicurean; but epicurean does not necessarily mean elaborate or luxurious or extravagant. An epicure (according to the Oxford Dictionary) is 'one who is choice and dainty in his eating and drinking'. A fresh herring, daintily grilled and served with well-made mustard sauce; a cup of freshly brewed tea, made with freshly boiled water; a piece of well-made toast, may be food fit for and appreciated by epicures.

And now I will give you some epicurean (and therefore simple) ways of cooking and serving pike. Fish weighing from 6 to 7 lbs. are best. Turbot, bacon and mushroom pie roofed with English puff pastry is good; but pike, bacon and


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mushroom pie is equally good. The only trouble is that mushrooms are not always available when the pike is at its best. Anyhow, as indoor mushrooms can sometimes be bought, and the pie is so good, I'll give the recipe in which mushrooms are used as well as the one in which they are not.

Pike and Mushroom Pie. Ingredients: ½ lb. mushrooms; ½ lb trimmings from the end of a cooked ham (or some strips of streaky bacon); 2 lbs. boiled pike; 1 pint milk; a little thyme; sweet marjoram, winter savory and a sprig of basil; black and cayenne pepper; salt; lemon peel; ½ lb. puff pastry. Method: Peel the mushrooms, stalks and all, and put into a fireproof oven dish with a cover. Season with pepper and salt; pour over the milk, cover the dish, and bake in a moderately hot oven for ½ hour, not taking off lid. Take out and allow to cool. Meantime, cook the pike or part of it, in boiling salted water. When done, allow to cool. Drain milk off mushrooms, and put aside to make sauce. Cut mushrooms and stalks into rather large dice and put in layer in bottom of the dish. Make a sauce in the usual manner with 1 oz. butter, 1 oz. flour, pepper, salt and the mushroom milk (about ¾ pt.). Let it cool then pour a little on the mushrooms. Sprinkle them with powdered herbs and grated lemon peel. Cover with the ham or bacon cut into strips. Separate the pike from skin and bones. Divide into good-sized portions, blend well with rest of mushroom sauce, and fill the dish. Roof with puff pastry and cook in cool oven for 1 hour. Serve hot or cold. If hot, accompany with green peas and potatoes. If mushrooms are unavailable, oysters may be substituted. Canned oysters will do quite well, the liquid, with some milk or cream, being used instead of the mushroom milk for the sauce.

Stuffed Pike. When a pike has been cleaned but not scaled, the gills taken out and the roe thrown away, make a forcemeat with the above herbs, adding also a little mace, clove and nutmeg, some grated bread, a good piece of butter and two eggs. Stuff the pike with this. Skewer it round with its tail in its mouth, and bake, basted well with mutton or bacon fat. Serve with one of the following: 1. Brown gravy, pickled red cabbage and sliced lemon. 2. Red cabbage stewed as a vegetable and cold horseradish sauce, with brown gravy. 3. Brown gravy, oyster sauce and potatoes. 4. Brown gravy with chopped capers, gherkins and parsley. Cold cooked pike makes excellent fish cakes, kedgeree and curry.



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Wild Life and Tame

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'She was a good Cook as Cooks go; and as Cooks go, She went' *Saki*

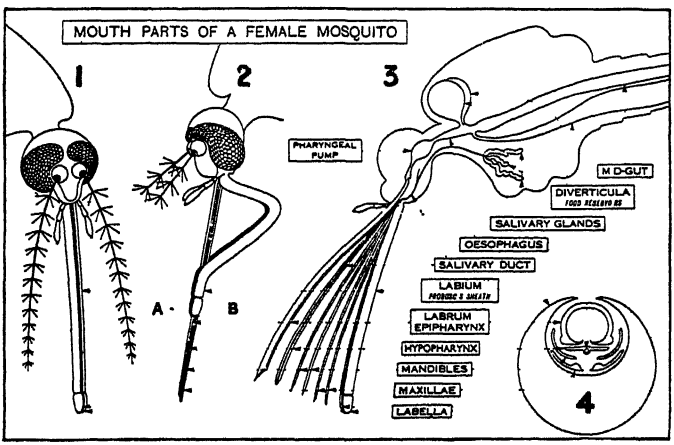
BUT who can blame the poor old dear? That old-fashioned range was no hardship when she was a scullery maid in her 'teens—but as the years went by she began to feel the strain it imposed on her. The raking and laying and lighting every morning meant early hours—dark, cold, dreary hours in winter; the blackleading came harder and harder on her stiffening joints; the heat of the range itself brought on increasingly frequent fits of giddiness—and the endless stoking and riddling started the rheumatism in her shoulders.

So one morning she appeared in the drawing-room in tears. For nearly 40 years she had cooked for them, but now she must give notice—and so she went

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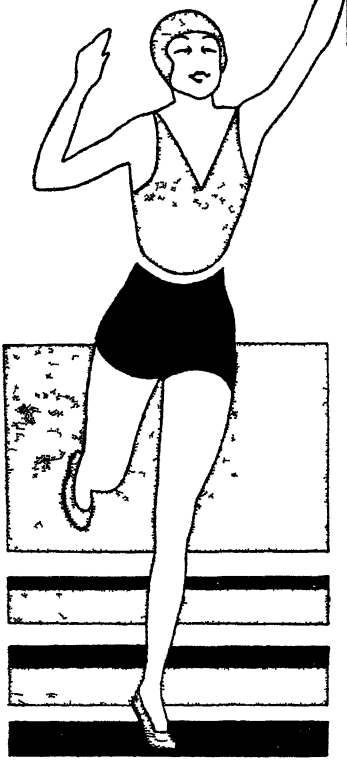
for sucking blood consists of half a dozen instruments concealed within the sheath of her proboscis. In the act of biting the sheath slides back, giving play to the instruments. These are dug down until they reach blood. The mosquito is able to fill her stomach with blood by an act of quick suction. As she withdraws the instruments they fold neatly back inside the proboscis, the outer sheath of which slides down over them, packing them away automatically as it were. Considered merely as a bite, that of the mosquito is no more hurtful than the bite of any other fly. The risk of serious consequences, such as a fatal attack of septicaemia, arises from the fact that the creature is in the habit of feeding at polluted sources. This is especially true of Theobaldia annulata. The victim is vaccinated with poisonous microbes. The risk is so grave that a mosquito bite should always be



THE MOSQUITO'S FEARSOME BITING AND BLOOD DRAWING APPARATUS

No. 1 shows the mosquito at rest, No. 2 how the mosquito bites, the dotted line A—B indicating the surface of the victim's skin, and Nos. 3 and details of the armament

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treated with disinfectant. The eggs of most species of mosquito are about a thirty-second of an inch in length. Some species lay on water, some on land, Culex pipiens deposits her eggs in waterbutts, etc., in rafts, each of which contains about 300 eggs, a beautiful object. The eggs of many species remain unhatched for long periods, if they are deposited in a dry place, hatching out only when water gets to them. Mosquito larvae float just under the surface of the water and get air through breathing apparatus at their hinder end. Culicine larvae lie head downward, Anophiline larvae horizontally. The breathing openings break the surface film of the water and the larva is able to feed either by oscillating a pair of mouth brushes, which cause a miniature whirlpool to collect floating particles, which are then swallowed, or by devouring water fleas, dead leaves, etc. The larva changes its skin four times during the period of growth. After the fourth moult it becomes a pupa, a curious, bulb-shaped creature with a lobster-like tail. The pupa rests in the water tail downward and takes in air through a pair of trumpet-shaped tubes projecting from its thoracic region. Having no mouth it neither eats nor drinks. At the end of a few days the pupa splits open and the adult mosquito emerges. The larval and pupal stages are passed entirely in water. The total period of growth varies from three weeks to several months, as biological and other circumstances determine. Hence it follows that mosquitoes can propagate only in places where water is permitted to lie stagnant for long periods. An effective way of getting rid of mosquitoes is, therefore, not to allow stagnant water to remain. Another method is to cover the surface of stagnant water with a film of oil and thus kill the larvae. Yet another plan is to introduce into the infested water, if deep enough, sticklebacks, goldfish or other creatures that feed upon the eggs and larvae of mosquitoes. So much for dealing with larvae in summer and autumn. At the approach of winter, Culex pipiens invades houses, often in enormous numbers. The remedy

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is to spray with insecticide in the cellars, attics or dark cupboards which have been invaded. Many people are unable to distinguish between a mosquito and innocuous flies that resemble it. If a fly is not equipped with a beak it is not a mosquito. A mosquito is a two-winged insect which carries on its head a beak or proboscis, a pair of maxillary palps or feelers and a pair of 14-jointed antennae. In the males the antennae are bushy, in the females slender. The palps of the males are long and tufted; those of the females are slender. The mosquito has the honour of having a special institution devoted to it, the British Mosquito Control Institute at Hayling Island. The subject of the 'note' emitted by mosquitoes is now being investigated. There is a theory that this is a love song and that by reproducing it by electrical frequencies, mosquitoes can be attracted to apparatus that will destroy them. Both male and female emit a 'note'. A popular belief that a mosquito is not heard until after it has bitten is inaccurate. – *J. J. Bennett*

FRIENDSHIP of Grass Snakes. Some years ago, in a hole in an orchard bank by the side of a path which I went down day by day, I had a grass snake. Almost every day as I passed by I would catch sight of its bright eye; the creature seemed to be watching me, and if it thought about me, decided that I should do it no harm. The next summer it was no longer there, and I missed its silent presence. This year I have been more fortunate. On a hot morning in June, coming up through the rock garden, I saw in one of the pools a grass snake among the leaves of a water lily. Its head and three or four inches of neck were clear of the surface, and the sunshine glinted in its gold-brown eye as in a jewel – as beautiful a combination of light, life, water and blossom as I could imagine. But it saw me and made for a crevice among the rocks lining the pool. I waited for a long time, but did not see it again. This was a snake of some twenty inches. A few days later the gardener came upon a grass snake in the rock garden about four feet long. He saw

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it again a week or so after, close by among some hazel stubs. And on August 18 my daughter, coming up the lawn from the rock garden, saw coiled about a myrtle-bush under the terrace, a snake which she judged to be about two feet or thirty inches. It slipped in among the stems of winter jasmine on the terrace wall, and I think must have its home in a hollow behind a weeping-hole. But I hope to see it and perhaps the big snake in the water again. I like to think that these creatures will live a friendly existence among my gentians and campanulas, and perhaps keep down the mice which occasionally invade the pockets of soil, and set me problems of discovery among the close-knit branches of creeping shrubs. Rock garden pools, too, contain frogs, and perhaps in time the grass snake may count the place a sort of sanctuary. – *E.P.*

DOG Stories. I suppose the truth is that people who know about dogs will believe anything, and those who don't, will believe nothing. – *N.E.*

BARKING. Why do many breeds of dogs bark when in hot pursuit of their prey? Is it extreme excitement only, or does the sound have its effect upon the quarry? Having occasion to move an outhouse, a rat of abnormal size scurried from below it and disappeared into a heap of stones, which covered the mouth of a drain, just as the dog was making its grab. Ned's vexation was beyond measure. For close on two hours he continued to bark, occasionally lying down from utter fatigue, with his forepaws extended, but never taking his eyes off the hole into which the rat had disappeared. To my surprise, during a specially violent paroxysm the rat darted from the hole, to be instantly nabbed, and despatched. The rat was in absolutely safe cover, the drain extending for a considerable distance underground. Surely the continued barking must have acted on the nerves of the rat, creating a feeling of terror, and an irresistible impulse to seek other quarters. – *A.R.B.*

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Angling — 14. *Lapses, by 'Salfario'*

SOME days, for some reason or another, all good anglers do wrong things. It is a consoling thought. We who often fish badly may be comforted by telling ourselves that we are really good anglers. Perhaps we are good anglers, in the making, if we have sense enough to know that we have, in fact, done something very foolish. Doing things mechanically right for many years does not mean that we are incapable of lapses or of slipping back into the most elementary faults and failings. Occasionally the machine slips a stroke. Or it is better to say we find we are no machine at all but just human and therefore quite capable of lapses. There is no angler who is not aware of the unfailing wisdom and necessity of fishing upstream when pursuing trout. Yet almost all wet fly anglers do – at odd times – commit the lazy, thoughtless, somewhat stupid error of fishing down stream. The adjective odd seems to fit the crime for it is odd that we should ever be guilty of it. I have done it. Why? Because – frankly because I saw others doing it, because it was easy and it saved a lot of energy and trouble. If you know nothing of rushing northern streams, strewn with rocks and furious with gravelly interruptions then you may well sneer. To fish downstream is never a temptation on a southern chalk stream or on a trout stream in France or Germany. The water never suggests such a thing. If you know these and you do not know the hurried, swirling, rushing waters of the north then withhold your judgment of those of us who confess our sins. For, indeed, these waters may well be the place of your temptation one day. And you will be as likely to fall as any one of us. For two days in May the Eden was my undoing and I fished lazily and stupidly downstream. Each day I returned to my kind and comfortable host with but little to show either in numbers or in weight. I saw the error of my ways one day when I noted a hatch of Iron Blues skimming a smooth but

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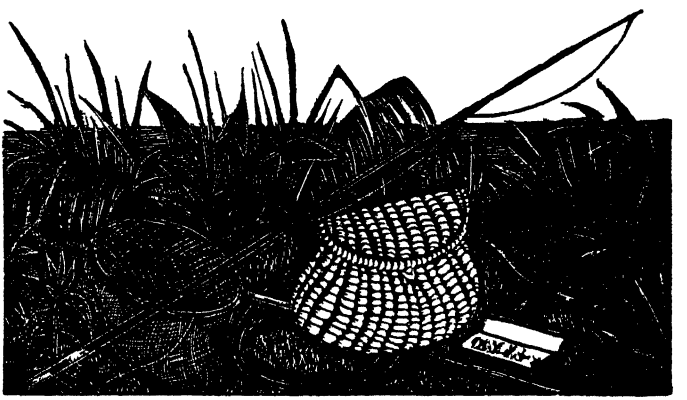
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¶ Mr. Saxon is co-author of 'The Complete Guide to Sound, Successful and Attractive Food Reform,' now in its eighth edition

¶ Associated with The Health Centre under Mr. Saxon's direction are: The Vitamin Cafe, 419 Oxford Street, W.1 (Ambassador 2111), and The Saxon School of Food Reform (cookery and food preparation), 46 Lancaster Gate, W.2 (Paddington 8900)

swiftly flowing flat. I got to that arduous work of fishing hard and short straight upstream. My host was as well pleased as I was with the basket which that virtuous arduous work produced. And what a difference in the fish caught this way! They were twice the average weight of those I had taken during my period of sloth and laziness. And what a game it was to handle them! More than I caught flashed past me in that strong stream and kicked themselves to freedom in the heavy water which roared below me. And they were welcome to their freedom. Many were coaxed with sane and steady reeling into the calmer water by my side. But in every case it was a matter of seconds and as often as not the trout won – for which I was ashamed but not a little pleased. To catch a fair-sized trout in that water, fishing downstream, was an accident. To get one fishing upstream called for all the skill and nerve and quickness that was ever mine to possess in my most inspired moments. One fellow of about 1 lb. took a Blue Dun, raced upstream, hesitated and as he was about to turn, my left hand swooped down the net and it happened to be in the right place when he dashed towards me and the heavy water. He was in the



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net and I had a loop of slackened line in front of me at least five yards long. That, you will believe me, was inspiration and is the sort of thing that cannot happen when you are fishing downstream, for, when you are fishing that way, there is no call for such quickness of either thought or action. Fishing these heavy waters with a short line upstream you will hook feeding fish and not fish that are merely playing. (It is a near relation, this method, to nymphing on a chalk stream but much harder work because of the quicker flowing water.) But, your trouble will always be that your fish will get below you and it is thus that you will lose as many as you catch. With small hooks and a four × cast you will find yourself peculiarly helpless when your ½ lb. trout has got his head into a heavy foaming rapid. You will make strenuous efforts to stumble out of the clinging water and try to draw him into the slack with a rod lowered towards the shore. And you may succeed. When you do you will be a little breathless but very pleased. And you will know that you have not been fishing badly.

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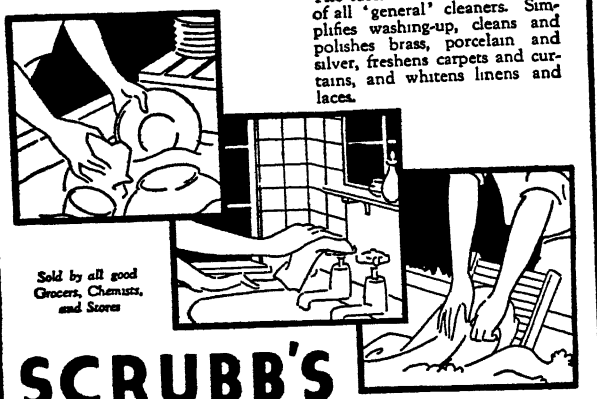
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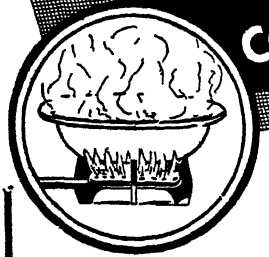
30A

From Rural Scotland and Rural Wales

by the Duke of Montrose and others

ORKNEY and Shetland Islands. Let the jaded worker who turns to his or her dream ship, dream farm or dream island consider the health-giving air, lovely views, interesting bird life and ever varied walking routes in these northern lands. But some of Orkney's greatest interest lies in her antiquarian remains. The Standing Stones of Stenness form the largest stone circle in this country. Standing, as they do amid the heather, surrounded by an old moat, and overlooking Lochs Stenness and Harray, they are an imposing sight. The large chambered mound of Maeshowe is a particularly fine one. One enters, with bent shoulders, through a long, low, passage into a large circular chamber of wonderful construction. Off this chamber are two or three smaller ones at a higher level. The walls of the main chamber are covered with well cut Runic inscriptions. These tell us the names of those who cut them or relate some little incident that happened in the mound. One says 'Even Ingagerthe the proud bowed her head to enter here'. The village of Skerra Brae has recently been excavated from the sand at Skaill bay. Its little winding street with huts on either side is a remarkable sight. Each hut is roughly circular and has a stone dresser, a fire place, sometimes a quern stone and nearly always some small, stone, water-tight boxes in the floor. In these the inhabitants are supposed to have kept their shell-fish. Numerous finds of carved beads, needles and stone implements have been made. Jarlshoff in Shetland is now in process of excavation and seems to be the same kind of thing. Both Orkney and Shetland are rich in Pictish brochs, the best one being the far-famed Mousa, in Shetland. These brochs were enormous round towers of incredible strength, capable of withstanding a long siege. The inhabitants drove their beasts into the centre of the broch and barred the outer stone door. As there was always a well in the middle

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of these towers the beseiged had nothing to fear from either hunger or thirst. Then there is the beautiful cathedral in Kirkwall, the capital of Orkney; it is nearly 800 years old and is quite one of our best preserved ecclesiastical buildings. With the Earls' and Bishops' Palaces close by, this corner of the town is picturesque and attractive. A great feature of the cathedral is its red sandstone.

Shetland is famous, of course, for its wool; and the Fair Isle, mid way between Orkney and Shetland, is equally famous for its jumpers of intricate patterns and wonderful colours, now so much copied and worn. These patterns are reputed to have been taught the Islanders by the survivors of one of the ships of the Spanish Armada, wrecked on the island on its flight before the storm and Drake. This seems highly probable as many of the same designs are to be seen on Moorish rugs. The Fair Isle has but one village, with 120 or so inhabitants, but life seems attractive enough, though quiet. I know a person who never fails to spend a month there each year. The Shetland Isles, and indeed a few of the Western Isles, are in danger of losing some of their wool trade. The old custom of hand-spinning and vegetable dyeing of wools is passing away, and the natives are more and more sending their wool to Galashiels and similar places to be mechanically spun and aniline-dyed. There is no comparison in softness, lustre and colour beauty between hand-spun, vegetable-dyed wools and the mechanically spun, aniline-dyed wools. It is the same with tweed patterns; there is an inclination to adopt English designs in the northern made cloth. The Shetland Islanders should keep to their own delightful Shetland patterns.

Lerwick, the capital, is a wonderful sight at the height of the fishing season, with over four hundred trawlers and drifters moving in and out of the splendid harbour. Then there is the sight of some two hundred girls gutting the herring, salting them and packing them with amazing speed. Rod fishing in the innumerable lochs and burns is



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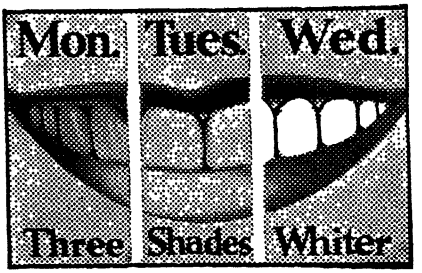


practically open to anyone on payment of a small fee. In the island of Yell I heard of an angler who caught eight nice sea trout in an hour. As for sea fishing, at a place not far from Hillswick it is possible to catch pollack – or 'piltics' as they are locally called – by trolling six flies at once on each of two rods, and have a fish on every fly. One man in four hours one evening caught 1500 'piltics' by this method. Then there are the sea birds to watch, eider duck, guillemots, divers and many others. Noss Head is famous for its wheeling, screaming thousands. The turf on some of the rolling hills – more like miniature Sussex downs than hills – is marvellous, with its original wild white clover. The Shetland hills are of limestone formation, and this accounts much for the lovely turf. One can see a number of Shetland ponies about. They were at one time in great demand for the coal mines in England, but since many pits have been closed, and others mechanized, there is now a slump in the market and I heard of 'shelties' being sold for 5*s*. On the whole there are few more delectable places for a holiday than these islands, amid the charm of nature, and the kindliness of the simple inhabitants. 'Boreas Amicus, Mare Domus.' – *M.*

THE Problem. It was during the dry spell in the beginning of June that I met a Lothian farmer. 'Are you crying out for rain like the lave?' I asked him. 'What for?' he snorted, 'To gar crops grow we canna sell?' – *J.F.D.*

'*CEWYLL*'. The basket-maker at the Rural Community Council display of country crafts at the National Eisteddfod sent my mind back to some of the remarkable craftsmen I have met in Welsh country districts and the work they did for the farmers. No farm was complete without a full equipment of 'cewyll', (plural of 'cawell') baskets of various sizes for carrying hay, chaff, and chopped roots from the stack and the barn to the cowhouse and the stable, and most farmers took pride in having good ones. The most usual shape was a kidney-shaped cawell that was

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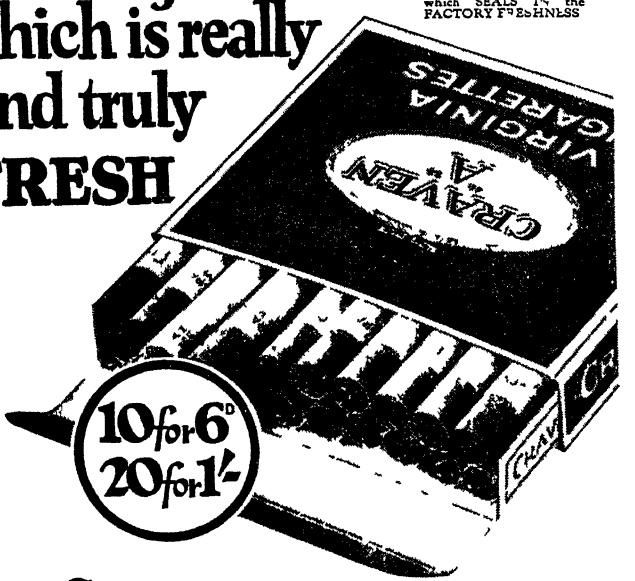
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slung on the back, and it was a matter of professional pride with the maker that it should, as nearly as possible, hold water. The hay cawell was an open-work affair, with the bottom and the top band closely woven. Mr. John Jones, of Pencarth, Chwilog, in Caernarvonshire, who still practises the old craft, tells me he uses hazel, mountain ash, and willow twigs for this kind of basket. The best baskets are made of hazel. The hazel twigs bend better, and their contraction in drying is more uniform. If mountain ash is used the twigs should be plants of a year's growth. They make a more ornamental basket and worms do not find them palatable, but they do not dry so satisfactorily as hazel. Willow wands of different colours are used if a pattern is desired, and willow alone is used for flat-bottomed baskets, for all other woods crack if the twigs are bent to make the flat bottom. The disadvantage of willow is that it contracts in drying more than other woods. To-day baskets are less used by farmers, and it is not often now that you find a farmer who can mend his own baskets. That was a common accomplishment thirty years ago. Life on the farm has changed rapidly in recent years. Only the other day Dr. Alun Roberts was rejoicing because he had been able to secure a good specimen of the gorse-chopping machine for the museum of agricultural implements he is forming at the University College, Bangor. I was a little startled for, when I was a boy, that machine, now become a museum piece, was to be found, either hand- or water-driven, in every Welsh barn.– *E.M.H.*

IT would seem that Sir Trustram Eve has been enjoying himself in arranging for the official opening at Biddenham of the restored (William and Mary) dove-cot (work supervised by Professor Richardson). It contains, he says, 'one parlour or living room and 461 bedrooms'. The company which gathered for the ceremony was invited to move '130 pieces of our nice local stone from heaps to positions indicated on the borders of roads and paths on the green.'

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NUMBER of Country House Aeroplanes. The number of privately owned aeroplanes in the country – this does not include Army and Navy, air taxi or light aeroplane club machines, but only those used as personal vehicles – is 434, of which 49 are owned by women. To estimate the number of country house landing grounds is not easy. While a number of owners have fully equipped landing grounds with hangars, etc. – one has complete night landing equipment, including floodlight and beacon – there are other fields which are frequently used by visitors but as yet have nothing more than a wind sock in the corner to indicate them. There are probably 26 fairly regularly used landing fields. Considerably more than half of these have small hangars.

The financial stringency of the last year has certainly checked the increase in the number of private aeroplanes, but there has been a small increase. The cost of flying has not come down very much, but the type of aeroplane and equipment now in use by private owners is steadily improving. I know several private owners whose machines are equipped and often used for night flying. Turn indicators for flying by instrument in cloud or fog are becoming common. Several owners have wireless receiving sets enabling them to pick up weather reports when in flight, and with the increased popularity of cabin machines, such as the Puss Moth and now the twin-engined 'Monospar', the general standard of comfort is vastly higher than it was in the days of flying with goggles and leather coats, which were essential when you first started 'The Country House Aeroplane'. We who are engaged in the business look forward to a steady development in private flying and are grateful to influences like THE COUNTRYMAN which encourage this development. What may not happen in another four years – by 1936? – *H. N. St. V. Norman*

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Country Books of the Quarter

A GUIDE TO THE BEST READING

IT was bound to come, a tale making game of squalid farm and hamlet fiction. And so, in *Cold Comfort Farm or a Good Woman's Influence* (Longmans, 7*s.* 6*d.*), Stella Gibbons' heroine sets off for the blasted acres, hoping only that her cousins are not called Seth or Reuben, for on farms under a curse the highly-sexed sons have always those names. It seems that 'the Dawn' – and the author politely three-stars her purple passages – 'crept over the Downs like a sinister white animal, followed by the snarling cries of a wind eating its way between the black boughs of the thorns'. But she heard a cry from the plough, "Upidee, Travail! Ho, there Arsenic. Jug-jug". In the cowhouse there was Adam Lambsbreath about to milk Pointless, who was eating Graceless's' tail and, 'linked as he was to all dumb brutes by a chain forged in soil and sweat, he took it out of her mouth and put his neckerchief into it'. The hired girl was not in the farmhouse kitchen to do the work, for 'her hour was near at hand; was it not February and the earth a-team with newing life? Frond leapt on root, the finch-fly were not spared and the screaming owls mated every ten minutes'. As to Adam, poor fellow, his 'earthy calm' – three stars – 'seeped up from its sub-conscious and met descending calm in his conscious'. 'Her dearly-loved copy of the Pensées of the Abbé Fausse-Maigre' helped the heroine as 'the King's Evil blighted the corn and the Queen's Bane laid waste the clover and the Princes Forfeit brought black ruin on the hay and cows were barren and the sows were farren as come-ask-it'. Concerning the hired girl: ' "Tes the fourth time, whispered Judith thickly. "Every year, in the fulness o' summer, when the sukebind hangs heavy from the wains tes the same. Tes the hand of Nature, and we women cannot escape it." "Oh, can't we?" said Flora." ' Though

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Seth proved to be a victim of the sukebind, Reuben was content to 'scranlet two hundred furrows come five o'clock from Ticklepenny's Corner down to Nettle Flitch', and halfway through the book, where it is only fair to the author that we should take our leave, the heroine addresses herself to the problem of the young squire, Richard Hawke-Monitor. We may be easy in our minds about her, for at her call in the stable has she not Viper, the nineteen hands gelding? What a lark if *Cold Comfort Farm* should happen to be served out by mistake in the publishers' excellent theological series! In *Island Dwellers* by R. M. Lockley (Putnam, pp. 345, 7*s.* 6*d.*) we have the result of careful study of the ways of life of 'that little community of fishermen, farmers, laver-weed pickers and labourers dwelling in the extreme south-westerly peninsula of Wales', among scenery with which readers of 'Dream Island' and of COUNTRYMAN articles from Skokholm are already pleasantly familiar. This simply-told story of an island, the fight for its possession and the love story of the maid of the island, provide a happy and human accompaniment to studies of bird and animal life. Between his activities as farmer and writer, the author ought to find time to write a book about his own island which boys and girls might treasure as another 'Swiss Family Robinson'. People equipped to produce such a work are rare. – *The English Landscape in Picture, Prose and Poetry*, collected by Kathleen Conyngham Greene (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 217, with pictures on every other page, 12*s.* 6*d.*) is the kind of book which can be done badly. It has been done well in this volume because the editor is a poet and has lived long enough abroad to feel the need of 'English men and women away from England, not for ticketed beauty spots but for little simple things'. In the belief that 'those who look for it can still find in every county the fair England of a poet's dream', she has made a collection which 'does not pretend to be an anthology of English landscape descriptions' or, photographically, 'what is finest in English scenery', but

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does provide 'a memory of the real England that lies beyond the range of char-à-bancs'. To do full justice to one's own country is not, however, to be unable to value the beauties of other countries, and we remember K. C. G. writing when she was in Japan:

> The blessing of her sun-warmed days;
> Her sea-spun cloak of wet;
> Her pointing valleys, veiled in haze,
> Where field and wood have met;
> When we have gone our differing ways
> These we shall not forget.

— After another summer's county 'pageants' of the good old times which have played fast and loose with history, sociology and economics, it is well to come on A. K. Wickham's *Villages of England* (Batsford, pp. 51, about 150 photographic reproductions and sketches, 12*s*. 6*d*.). For the author owns that the medieval village was 'no great loss'. 'In appearance,' he says, 'it probably had more relation to the villages of Central Africa than to those we know in England to-day. The houses were of mud and wattle and thatch, and few of them were as good or picturesque as those which now survive of these materials. They were squalid and temporary erections of which the beasts were as much inhabitants as men. Houses were so insubstantial that a clause in the Assize of Clarendon in the year 1166, says that anyone who shall receive certain heretics shall have his house carried outside the town and burnt. I doubt, too, whether the usual system of land cultivation was an aesthetic asset to the village. Imagine an England largely devoid of hedges or rows of trees, a squalid village in the centre of the field, and a mass of tangled woodland at the outskirts.' The book has quality, but one cannot help wondering just how many of the cottages in villages that look so fine in the photographs will be damp this winter, and just what proportion satisfy reasonable hygienic requirements in lighting and ventilation for either children or grown-ups. — The Ordnance Survey (Southampton) continues its valuable work of giving

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maps, 21*s.*) by W. Harding Thompson, following close on his *Cornwall*. The Hon. Sir John Fortescue does a preface, and the book in text and illustrations is full of interest, information and stimulus. – Another noble volume, *The Cumbrian Regional Planning Scheme*, by Professor Patrick Abercrombie and Sydney A. Kelly (Hodder and Stoughton, pp. 238, with 19 maps, the same number of plates – which are at once works of art and perfect illustrations – and half a dozen diagrams, 12*s.* 6*d.*) must fire the patriotism of every Cumberland man and woman who reads it. A public outside Cumberland is concerned with the proposals for safeguarding the beauty of the Lake District and the proposals for a national park. We particularly like the observation that by-passes are for facilitating traffic, not for providing a frontage for building and stopping vehicles. – The second volume of the S.P.A.B.'s praiseworthy *English Windmills*, by Donald Smith (Architectural Press, pp. 164, 39 illus., 5*s.* 6*d.*) accounts for Essex, Middlesex, Herts and Bucks. There are about forty windmills in Essex alone. – *Cloudy Ladder*, by Vernon Barlow (Cranston, 7*s.* 6*d.*), is not a remarkable novel, but the author has a feeling for the country and an anecdote of a gardener who, when the son of the house was going off to school, appeared at the station with a bag of pippins. 'You'd have stolen 'em if you'd been here,' he said, 'so why not if you weren't?' – Mrs. Cranswick's *Broad Acres* (Constable, 3*s.* 6*d.*) because it is an excellent Yorkshire story is in a second edition. – *Three Lands on Three Wheels* by Jan and Cora Gordon (Harrap, pp. 359, illustrated by sketches, 12*s.* 6*d.*) consists of two cheery artists' notes of a tour on a motor cycle and sidecar, across France, England and Ireland. The book is discerning and informing about people and inns. The authors are sure that the Frenchman gets more for his money from the Touring Club of France than the Englishman receives from the A.A. They contrast landscapes thus: 'In the German there is something autocratic, humble and utilitarian at once. The great forests, the

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hedgeless areas of intense cultivation, and the fruit trees bordering every road, all bespeak somehow the division between aristocrat and *Bauer* which has left Germany the last of the feudal nations. In France the landscape is economical and parsimonious, despite its richness; compare its starved elms with our paunched oaks. English landscape has been shaped by those comfortable people we call, in our pride of lineage and slight disdain of aristocracy, the upper middle class. Ours is essentially a self-contented, opulent landscape, and its opulence of form is matched by its richness of colour.' From Ireland the authors save up the greeting, 'Ah, 'tis a grand saft day intirely'. A man who watched sketching being done said 'Sure it must be tiresome to do that all day'. In Aran they saw men threshing by grasping handfuls from the sheaves and beating them against an upright stone, at the foot of which a cloth was spread to catch the flogged-out grain. – *The Cycling Road to Health and Fitness* by Wilfrid Hill, aged 65 (Chemico Works, Birmingham, 6*d.*) has a preface by the Rev. Frederick Hastings and a portrait of him cycling at 94. – The fifth edition is published of the *Dunlop Guide*, with references to 2,000 places and 32 pages of atlas (E. J. Burrow, Cheltenham). – *Dicky Chimes, being the History and Adventures of Richard Fitz Chimes* (Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is a novel of 51 chapters which takes an ingenious way of its own in the modern world, in a kind of 18th century lingo, and has some realistic rural scenes. – R. and K. Barrett's *Cloudtop Mosaics* (Heffer, pp. 176, 3*s.* 6*d.*) is novel, for it records the impressions of a husband and wife during a stay in tents on a crag above the clouds on Tenerife. – *Mountains and Valleys*, in the Art for All, Water Colour Series (Pitman, 2*s.* 6*d.*) contains, in 38 half page illustrations in outline and colour, indications of procedure for the beginner. – *Sketching in Pen and Ink*, by the accomplished Donald Maxwell (Pitman, pp. 132), with useful illustrations, by way of example, opposite every page by the author and other masters of line, is exactly what

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Garden, Field and Farm. – The Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, writes a foreword to an edition of *Culpepper's English Physician and Complete Herbal* edited by W. J. Ferrier (W. and G. Foyle, pp. 155, 5*s.*) because, 'though it has passed through so many editions, the plants have never before been correctly named and described'. Each plant is accompanied on the same page with Culpepper's wisdom on its 'government and vertues' and its time and places of flowering. The barberry will 'purge the bodies of my countrymen of choler'. – *The Book of the Garden* by Arthur Stanley (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 265, 6*s.*, illus. by Hal Woolf) is a kind of history of gardening since Eden. We have the Elizabethan instruction that 'gentlewomen, if the ground be not too wet, may doe themselves much good by kneeling upon a cushion and weeding'. In matters of our own day we are reminded that London and Reading alone offer degrees in Horticulture. The author is for allowing plants elbow room, and asks that gardens should look as if they were lived in. 'There's one thing you didn't put into your garden,' said one garden visitor, 'you didn't put yourself into it.' – Sir Daniel Hall, tulip grower, writes a preface to Dr. Darlington's *Chromosomes and Plant Breeding* (Macmillan, pp. 126, illus., 7*s.* 6*d.*), in which he shows how useful and interesting such a book on the carriers of heredity must be not only to the practical hybridist and plant-breeder but to 'the amateur who aspires to take a part in the improvement of his favourite plant'. In this volume are unfolded the secrets of sterility and fertility, 'the curious anomalies in the behaviour and breeding of our chief fruit-bearing plants'. Apple-breeders who have attempted to use Blenheim Orange or Bramley's Seedling in their crosses may learn the reason of their failure. – *Intensive Systems of Apple Production* (H. M. Stationery Office), a fully illustrated ninepenny bulletin of the Ministry of Agriculture, is first-

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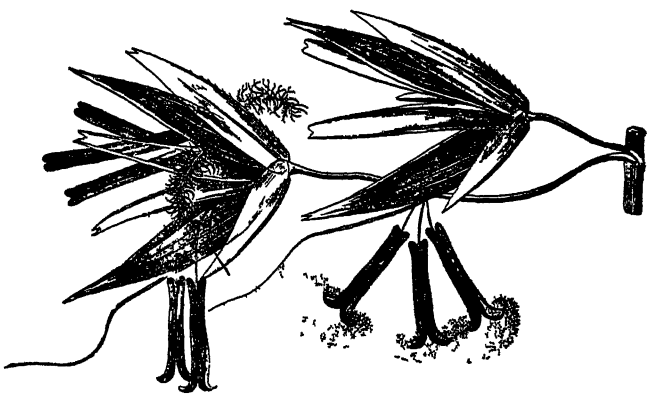
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rate. – *British Trees* (Lutterworth Press, 3*s.* 6*d.*) consists of a set of thirty-two large foolscap-size plates on card, illustrating sixteen kinds of trees at different seasons of the year, and giving details of leaf, blossom, fruit, etc. – *Field Philosophy*, by the well-known writer on natural history, Douglas Gordon (Murray, pp. 343, illus., 9*s.*), discusses with impartiality the pros and cons of many sporting questions and brings together a large collection of notes on the behaviour of birds and animals. He is of opinion that 'there are dogs capable of winding a bird fifty or even a hundred yards away'. Did not one spaniel board a dealer's van and make a furious assault on the eggs and butter with which it was loaded until he got to a number of concealed partridges? We are told of a rabbit which drove a stoat against a rock and then, 'lowering its fist-like head after the manner of a pugnacious ram, charged with such precision that his opponent was crushed against the stone like an eggshell'. The author follows another sporting author whom we recently reviewed, in protesting



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against the cruelties of badger baiting. 'I know', he writes, 'of a badger which was actually nailed to a tree stump by the tail while his captors tried their dogs upon him. – We are under obligations to the Cambridge University Press, which has given us perfect astronomy books and the Master of Downing's valuable manual on plants, for it now sends out a first-rate volume, *Biology, an Introduction to the Study of Life*, by Professor H. Munro Fox (pp. 360, 6*s*.) with an excellent illustration for nearly every page of text – see the accompanying specimens. – There are plenty of things in *Horn, Hoof and Corn* (Faber and Faber, pp. 209, 6*s*.) with which we disagree, but there is no mistaking Viscount Lymington's knowledge, sincerity and literary gift. In this book the future of agriculture is considered in relation to the State. That the author can be outspoken is evident from such an assertion as that 'the farmer is incapable of loyal voluntary co-operation and will sell the pass every time'. The extremes of which Lord Lymington is capable are illustrated by the declaration that 'the virtual sealing off of Russia and America should in time be effected'. He is for us regarding the weather not as agriculture's enemy but its friend: 'no other country has possibilities of fertility and continual moisture in which there are no disasters of frost, hail, drought, cyclone or flood'. It is sound talk that 'bad teeth, rickety bones and feeble-mindedness should be a disgrace to the countryside'. On wages, Lord Lymington is for the Scottish system whereby specified quantities of milk, potatoes and even meat could be paid in addition to a minimum cash wage. This Conservative peer's view on the landlord is: 'If he fails to live up to his duties' he should be 'ruthlessly deprived of his individual rights, as in Italy. The land must become an industry rather than an amenity. The true absenteeism of the landlord to-day is in brain and leadership, which lies elsewhere in industry and sport. The alienation has been hastened by the family lawyer and the whole gamut of lesser family servants whom it has suited

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that an estate should be kept as an uneconomic amenity rather than as a means of responsible livelihood. The Cokes and Bakewells in leadership have degenerated too frequently into men who poke grossly overfed beasts, produced by often dishonest bailiffs, on Sunday afternoons.' 'Yet through it all,' he acknowledges, 'some of the fine spirit remains.' The author feels that 'an intensive cereal policy can never serve our purpose'. A provocative book, well worth reading.—Lord Ebrington in a foreword to *School for Horse and Rider* ('Country Life', pp. 135, with 23 diagrams and 40 photographic illustrations, 12*s.* 6*d.*), says that 'there is nobody better qualified to write a book on equitation' than its author, Captain Hance. It is doubtful whether the section on the rider or the section on the horse is the more practical and serviceable. — On general farming the *Second Report on the Profitableness of Farming in Scotland* (H.M. Stationery Office, 1*s.* 3*d.*) and the Cambridge University Agricultural Department's *Economic Survey of Agriculture in the Eastern Counties* (Heffer, Cambridge, 2*s.* 6*d.*) are valuable. On milk there come the Ministry's *Modern Milk Production* (H.M. Stationery Office, 9*d.*), Professor John Orr's *Economy in Feeding for Milk Production* (Manchester University Press, 6*d.*) and Wye College's *Milk Production over Five Years* (Wye College, 2*s.*). We have also *Technical Notes on Mechanised Farming* and *Occasional Notes on Mechanised Farming* (Institute for Research in Agricultural Engineering, Oxford, 6*d.* each). — The enterprising editor of the Royal Agricultural College's *Agricultural Students' Gazette* is to be congratulated on a magazine containing 134 pages of useful and interesting matter, but his printer might do better.

General Literature. — *Great Victorians*, edited by H. J. and H. Massingham (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 576, 8*s.* 6*d.*), is a large, alluring book. Forty conspicuous and typical Victorians — guessing at the clever list is amusing — are the subjects of studies at once vivacious, appreciative and critical. The writers are ably varied and have knowledge

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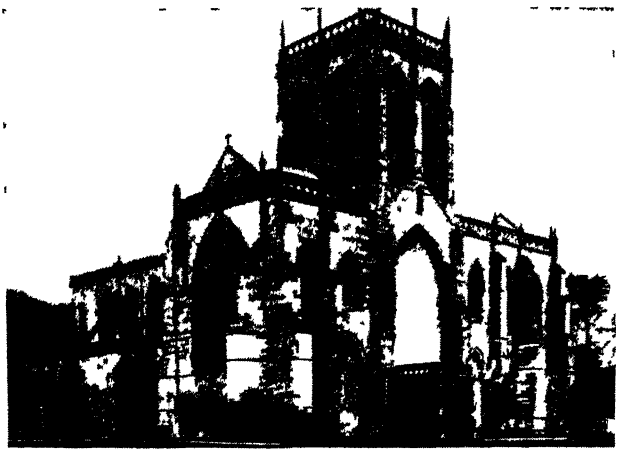
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involved is that whatever you do you should maintain the traditional character of the district. The modernist notion that you should build with modern materials in new and strange forms anywhere you please has no regard for the preservation of local characteristics. There is nothing gained by this attitude and the loss is apparent in the destruction of the types of building forms on which the charm of our country very largely depends. Whatever may be the limitations of your resources or the force of your desire for originality, test the skill of your architect by stipulating that he must in no way violate the principle of preserving the local character of the district. This process will give you the best aesthetic result, the highest material value, and justify any claim you may have to be considered a patriot.

(*To be continued*)

Country Lads for the Sea

FEW of our readers realize, we imagine, how many lads come from the counties to the 'Arethusa' training ship. The secretary has been good enough to compile this table: Wales, 29, Ireland 3, Scotland 7, Beds 9, Berks 40, Bucks 8, Durham 25, Cambridge 11, Cheshire 4, Cornwall 7, Cumberland 2, Derby 2, Devon 16, Dorset 9, Essex 51, Gloucester 10, Hants 58, Herts 17, Hereford 2, Kent 216, Lancs 10, Leicester 5, Lincs 10, Middlesex 53, Monmouth 9, Norfolk 13, Northants 1, Notts 3, Oxford 5, Salop 1, Surrey 115, Sussex 101, Staffs 9, Somerset 14, Suffolk 20, Warwick 12, Wilts 10, Worcs 7, Yorks 25. This is in addition to the hundreds from London, and does not include the children received into the Society's country homes.

COUNTRY PROVERBS. – 2. 'Ta'n toshiagh-jioarey as yn leighder gaase roauyr er ad mee hene.' ('Thou art promising me the birds, but I must catch them myself.') We are indebted for this proverb to the editor of the 'Isle of Man Examiner'.

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In this quarterly feature it is our policy to allow the utmost latitude of opinion, provided the status of correspondents in the agricultural world gives them a claim to be heard

GOOD NEWS. I have never known the agricultural community so keen as it is to-day. Contrary to general notions, it will adopt any new scheme, if it has any soundness in it, and is financially practicable, quicker than any other industry. For example, last year in this county someone tried out an experiment in dressing oat seed with 'Ceresan', some preparation of mercury, with remarkable results. This year I should say that three quarters of all the oats sown were treated. I treated mine and reduced my seeding by two bushels per acre, saving 6*s.* and never had thicker, better oats. – *An Aberdeen Farmer*

MILK as Manure in Holland. To-day I noticed a board outside a farm with 'Cheese sold here, 4*d.* per pound' on it. In Maastricht eggs were a trifle under ½d. each. Masses of cauliflower have been destroyed; you could buy them three a penny or take them away for nothing from the farms. In many districts a proportion of milk has to be thrown away. I have seen cows milked on the ground. All margarine must according to the new law have a proportion of butter. – *A Hollander Subscriber*

TRACTORS v. Horses. Tractors and horses cannot be compared specifically for costs. One can only come to the conclusion that farms with tractors are doing better or worse than horse farms. The tractor gives advantages of cash value not easily put into figures. With the tractor my arable fields are seeded in a day; with horses it was two, sometimes three days. I have the best oats locally because



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DO Tractors Pack the Land? After watching the effect of tractors on other farms and my own, I lean to the view that if the land is well done with dung containing plenty of straw, as is mine, the tractor does no harm; if the land is stinted for straw dung and largely kept up with artificials, heavyish land does pack and fall off in cropping returns. Dunging as I do it is only possible on smallish farms. On a farm over two hundred acres the dung cart becomes a serious expense. – *R. H. Rhodes*

A DELUSION. There is a delusion that the United States is one vast mechanized farm. It is a country of small farms – like Canada. The big mechanized farms are a tiny fraction of the whole – in numbers or acres. The small mechanized farm is firmly established, not the big one. And I think the medium-sized individual farm will always beat the big one, collectivist or company. I've been reading Astor, Lymington (not to mention Street) and others on the wheat question. I believe they are wrong, in as far as they condemn wheat-growing here, and right – I speak as a firm advocate of mechanization – in denouncing extravagant subsidies for it. Orwin's view that he would support present help for the wheat-grower in order to lessen hardship and



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smooth the difficult path of transition to modern methods is, I think, both wise and humane. There were 25 Combines at work this harvest. – *A Student of Mechanization*

BRICKLAYER as Farm Labourer. I decided in the spring to take on an extra man for the summer, instead of taking on daily men for root-hoeing, hay, harvest, etc. I decided to employ a young bricklayer in the village who was out of work. I thought he could fill in his time on various odd jobs. He was very good at hoeing roots, and at haymaking made up in vigour what he lacked in skill. He took to feeding the pigs carefully, so I got confidence in him and he is developing all round so well that I have decided to keep him on to replace my carter, who is going at Michaelmas to a place he has heard of in his native county. I pay the ex-bricklayer 36*s.* a week, and as he has his own house he is not badly off. He says he would rather settle down to farm work on those terms, which compares well with bricklaying considering the normal loss of wet time, apart from unemployment. The future will show how this man goes on. He is young, strong and energetic which all the unemployed are not and my farm with its very up-to-date lay out and equipment requires vigour and physique in its workers rather than skill in the old-fashioned sense. I and my foreman can supply the skill. Touching on this question of skill in modern farming, I think superintendence requires more skill than formerly. There is more scope for good judgment in ricking hay worked by machinery and swept up into a rick in a few days than in storing hay made in the old way with lots of labour. The same with pigs. If the farmer or some head man has skill, and he must be skilled to make the most of modern resources, the men will do if conscientious and intelligent. The modern dairy cow, however, needs a more skilled cowman than formerly if the best is to be got out of her. As a rough generalization I would say that the modern farm requires an alert, robust, intelligent worker, by no means the factory



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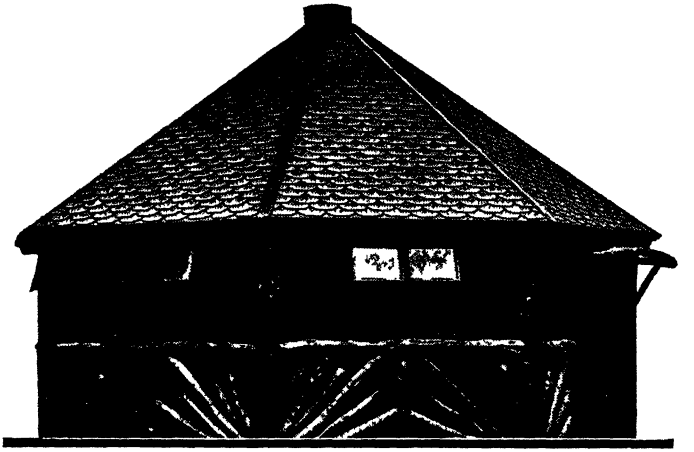
hand type, yet different from the old type; perhaps one might say the Colonial type. – *The Author of 'My Nine Years' Farming'*

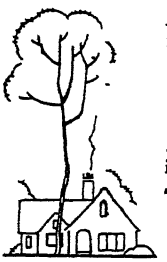
RUBBER Tyres in the Fields. Seeing that the experts have been so much impressed by the advantages offered by the Dunlop people's rubber tyres for agricultural vehicles, the village wheelwright must see that this new development does not go past him to the garages. – *Estate Agent*

THE Horses' Point of View. My corn was tangled, and what is worse, grown in. Thank goodness I have a tractor. Cutting tangled corn with horses is a terrible business. People who talk about its being so sad that horses are being given up, they are so fond of horses, they are not interested in farming without horses, etc., simply don't know what they are talking about. If I were a horse there is certain work like ploughing which I should enjoy. When one is young and fit continuous steady work, like rowing or cutting through trees with a crosscut saw, gives a sort of quiet joy which ploughing must give to a good pair of horses. They probably chat to each other occasionally in some way or other as they go along; but cutting tangled corn on a hot day with torturing flies and the constant hacking and backing to get the binder out of tangles must be a torturing job. Any horse lover with imagination must hate to see it. Mechanization makes the farming world fit for horses to live in by giving a few of them pleasant healthy work and a decent life. – *Farm-Owner*

THE Mythical Value of Hay. In some parts of the country there were in mid-August many fields of hay still uncut and others only partly mown. One farmer said, 'It's not worth mowing, for the price is only £1 a ton'; another that it was no more than 17*s.* 6*d.* This calculation of the value of hay by nominal sale price is stranger when, for a dozen years, a very small proportion of hay has been sold. Many farmers

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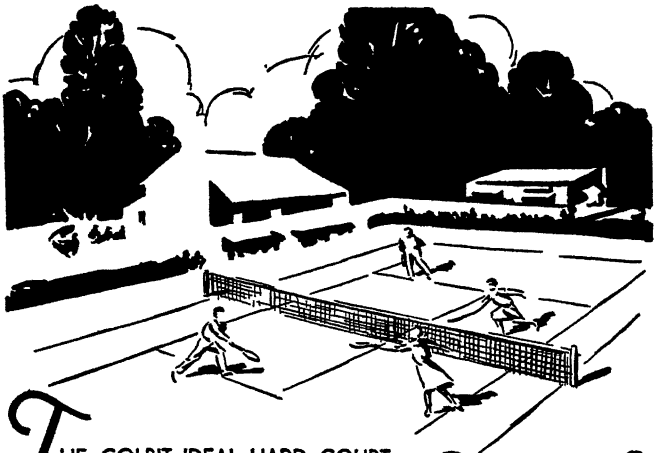
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have not sold any for years past. The real market for hay is through the livestock on the farms, its value being calculable on its feeding value in comparison with the costs of other feeds. The value this winter will probably be not below £3 per ton. Up to a couple of years ago, hay was one of the cheapest feeds on the farms when its comparative feeding value was checked against the cost of getting it. Any rise in prices of cereals or other concentrated feed will tend to restore this position.

GONE. Is anyone thinking of the effect on our rural life and on the rural life of the Continent of the closing of the United States and the British Oversea Dominions, to immigration? That is an immense change in conditions which have existed for generations.

SMOKE Screens. Remember nearly every industry has some general and special smoke screen talk, used for dealing with people on its fringes – the folk who are interested in a general way in wages and the prices of products, and the less critical local and national politicians. Agriculture is no exception. Weather grumbles are often justified, but sometimes they are merely excuses for a little lack of decision or organizing capacity, or for poor judgment – very well known by farmers to be such. Here is a case in point. One farmer was grumbling for the benefit of a visitor about this summer's vagaries. But his brother, a recently retired farmer, who has lived all his life in the same district, said: 'I don't see what he is grumbling about. Good weather in the earlier hay season when it was really worth getting. Stormy weather to set the roots going. Now topping weather to be getting on with the harvest. If they hadn't messed about with the hay, thinking the good weather was going to last for ever, they would have been all free for the harvesting now.' Smoke screens not only dim the landscape for the enemy. They get smoke into the eyes of those who use them. Things that are not wholly really believed in the first in-



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stance may be repeated until they gain the force of truth. And this is particularly true in times of depression, mental or financial. A little movement of the fresh air of optimism moves the smoke. Keen observers, at any rate, then judge by what they see rather than by what they hear. – *Cymru*

The Collector – 15. *Tea 'Katis' and 'Teapoys'*

THERE are no traces of the earliest tea caddies such as were used at a tea drinking such as Pepys describes. Garraway, who opened a teahouse in 1657 for connoisseurs of the beverage, doubtless kept the tea in Delft containers. The name 'caddy' is derived from the package in which the tea was imported, that is, a 'Kati', which held about 1⅓ lbs. These packages or boxes were lined with thin lead. The Chinese from early days had used a china 'teapoy'. It is possible that some of them accompanied the 'katis' to this country. The earliest 'teapoys' made in England were of porcelain; later came the delightful silver caddies of Queen Anne's time, and much later the examples in Sheffield plate. The choice tin caddies gaily painted, from Pontypool, are rare. The earliest metal caddies follow the porcelain pattern. Pairs of caddies were also made and were contained in a case of shagreen. Happy is the possessor of a pair of silver caddies of Pierre Gilois, the great specialist of George II's reign. As the eighteenth century progressed, the cabinet makers designed boxes in mahogany and satinwood, inlaid. The possession of a tea caddy was considered a sign of social status. There were other developments, for example, the porcelain caddies made in Worcester, 1760-5. Later came the square canisters made of black basalt ware by Wedgwood. Bristol produced white opaque bottles inscribed 'Hyson' and 'Bohea'. There are to be found square cut-glass caddies with silver mounts. Prices may vary from 5*s.* to £10. For silver caddies of Queen Anne date, or for examples by Pierre

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Gilois, as much as £150 may be asked. The lesser-priced caddies of Chippendale, Manwaring or Sheraton type are sometimes found with a glass sugar bowl, and are marvels of the cabinet maker's skill. Those made between 1760 and 1785 have moulded bases and tips with metal feet and handles. Nearly all have locks. Between 1790 and 1800, the caddies show a variety of shapes, elliptical, circular, oblong, octagonal. Satinwood is the material most favoured with silver or plated fittings. After the naval victory of Trafalgar the tea caddy took on the form of a sarcophagus, sometimes with sea horses painted on the inside of the lid. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, tea caddies and teapoys became Greek in character, and of monumental dimensions. Messrs. Morgan and Sanders evidently saw big business in teapoys on a stand. At the Great Exhibition, teapoys were made of papier mâché inlaid with mother of pearl. The cycle of design was now complete. Later fashion decreed against such ostentation. The market was now open for cheap tin containers for the million. 'Souchong', 'Bohea' and 'Imperial' tea was within reach of all. It was no longer precious or fashionable. Hence the decline of the tea caddy.

SHEEP MARKS. I am anxious to trace examples of sheep-marks (or keel-marks) formerly used in Bedfordshire. Ear-marks also would be welcomed, if distinctive, and not merely initials. The only examples found are dated 1608-13, and occur on the Bishops' Transcripts (annual copies of the parish registers) of Barton. These copies are certified by the two churchwardens, who use their 'sheepe-marks'. In several cases, these marks are merely the initial letters of surnames, but in two instances they are symbols. Barton parish lay partly on a branch of the Chilterns, and sheep-farming was important there. – *F. G. Emmison, Clerk of the Records, Shire Hall, Bedford*

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The Countryman's Wireless and Gramophone— 14. *Battery Sets*

WIRELESS manufacturers seem to have awakened to the fact that some of us have still a little money left to spend on battery-operated sets which are really up to date and will give a performance comparable with that of an all-mains set. There were a lot of battery sets at Olympia, some very good indeed, and mostly of the high efficiency 3-valve class so popular with the manufacturers of mains-driven sets. Philips showed a 4-valve battery set at under £12. Two other excellent examples were the Marconiphone 3-valve model 252 at £9 17*s.* 6*d.* and the Columbia model 353 2-valve set at £4 19*s.* 6*d.* Both these last are entirely self-contained, the 3-valve Marconiphone consuming only about 7 m/a from the high tension battery and the Columbia 2-valve about 5. I have found seventeen foreigners at good strength on the Marconiphone 3-valve and nine on the little Columbia 2-valve. The Six-Sixty, fitted with a moving-coil loud speaker, is, from a design point of view, a somewhat daring innovation. Two of the most interesting battery-driven receivers were the Superheterodyne Battery portables, one by H.M.V., model 459, and the other by Columbia, model 380, both at 17 guineas. These 6-valve portable receivers are in a class by themselves. Their degree of selectivity and range of reception and quality are excellent, and they are also economical to run. The all-mains sets are getting down to a reasonable basis both as regards price and performance. Everyone is talking 'superhets', but unless careful thought has been given to design, they are apt to be noisy and to introduce a number of unwanted sounds. The Marconiphone model 258, an automatic record-changing radiogramophone at 55 guineas is an example of what can be done with a superhet which will give 'clean' programmes with the minimum of background noise and the highest



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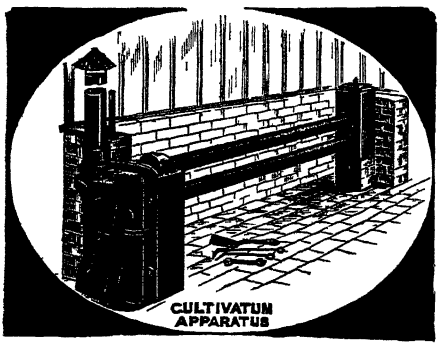
possible entertainment value. Various attempts to exploit the idea of having two loud-speakers, one to reproduce the high notes and the other the low notes, are being made. Whether or not the expense involved is worth it is a matter of opinion, but the fact remains that it is possible to design one loudspeaker which will give an admirable efficiency over the whole broadcast musical range. This was amply proved by a remarkable loudspeaker, the Hartley-Turner (Slektun Products, Ltd.). Anyone who is out for really high class reproduction should make a point of hearing it. But his set has to be a good one to do justice to one of the most marked advances at Olympia this year. My Olympia notes compel me to hold over my customary gramophone jottings, but I should like to say that I am struck by the number of people in the country who, having realized the interest and quality of the gramophone, are buying more records.

Women's Institutes

'*VILLAGE Washhouses and Bakeries.*' – Seeing that the Institutes got their general inspiration from Canada, they might find examples of useful enterprise in some of the co-operative laundries of Canadian farm communities. But we need not always go abroad for ideas of useful community activities. Defoe's description of a village dairy for the manufacture of cheese from the milk of all the farms in a village is not nearly so well known as it ought to be. Here farmers preceded even the Rochdale Pioneers. The parish of Tysoe in Warwickshire, owned and maintained a community washhouse until a little more than a century ago, and a community bakehouse even a little later. The village of Whatcote had a community washhouse not long ago.

THE Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, has been good enough to say that THE COUNTRYMAN has 'interested her very much' and she feels it must 'prove very useful'.

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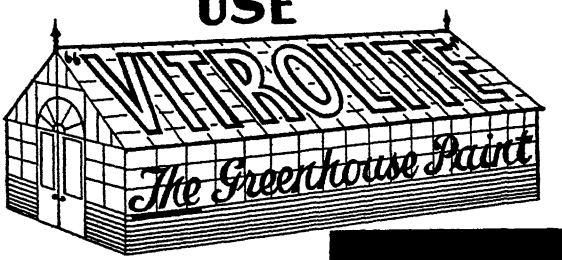
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The Garden and Orchard

SOME Plants for Dry Soils. Those who, like the writer, have their dwelling on dry sandy soils may like to have a list of plants which rejoice in such conditions. Speaking, to begin with, of shrubs, first I place the Deutzias, which not only tolerate a dry soil but will grow in a dry shade, not an easy condition for any plant. Under evergreen trees there are but few shrubs that really thrive, Deutzia is one. Another is the charming Kerria Japonica, most lovely in its single form where the flowers look like large buttercups spread out over the slender stems. There is a silver variegated leaf form which is also very good. Philadelphus of all sorts do well and, of course, Brooms and Gorse, the last perhaps the most beautiful flowering shrub we have. Helianthemums do not mind drought or even slight shade, if not too dry. The dwarf rockery varieties are well known; less common are the taller bushy forms such as Halimifolium, Candidum, Algarvense and Formosum, all of which have silvery leaves and bright yellow flowers, some touched at the centre with a dark chestnut spot. These are natives of Spain and Portugal and not quite hardy in some cold districts, except formosum which seems to be perfectly so. Fuchsias of the hardy growth, Riccartoni, gracilis and globosa, may be killed to the ground in severe winters but always spring afresh and make shoots, 6 ft. high, rather more elegant in this way, I think, than the uncut bush. Camellias grow quite well if given a little manure to give them a start and thrive even in competition with other shrubs in the border. Spirea arborea, a giant, will grow anywhere, making a tree 8 to 10 ft. high with stout branches. Heaths of most kinds stand drought well if lime is not present, and the year can be very nearly circled with their flowers in various varieties and species. Of herbaceous plants there are few that really like drought. I find the white Daisy Chrysanthemum maximum the best for this purpose, it will grow even in shade and against the

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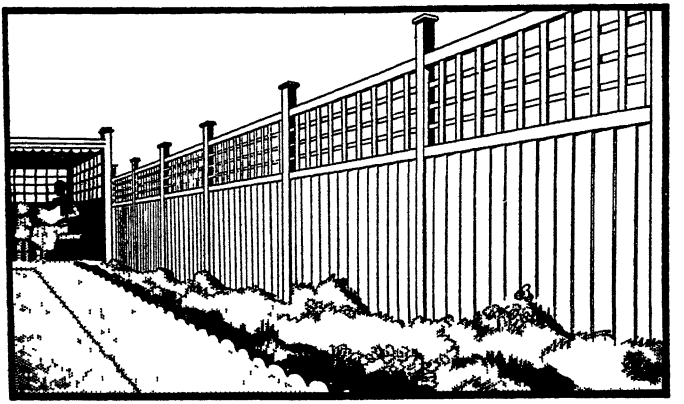
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stems of trees. There are many fine varieties of this useful plant now available. Chrysanthemums treated as perennials do quite well especially the old Pompin varieties which stand shade and drought well. Violas of some kinds are happy, Maggie Mott being one, but I find they need renewing after three years, the clumps after then get steadily worse; many of the yellow Violas also are equally happy.

There are not many annuals which are really at home in a dry summer on a dry soil. Bartonia aurea, Eschscholtzia and the lovely and neglected Hunnemannia, give yellows and cream. Salpiglossis do not object to a little drought and Phlox Drummondii will grow fairly well. Nasturtiums are obvious, flowering more freely than in moist conditions. Antirrhinums also may be seen growing on walls and are not therefore particular about water. Zinnias thrive in a warm summer and Marigolds (Calendula) will grow on the poorest of soils. Perhaps the worst trial the dry soil gardener has to suffer is the neighbourhood of large trees, drawing the available water far beyond the radius of their branches. No small garden should have forest trees in it. Cherries from Japan, flowering crabs, silver birch and the like may be entertained but elms, oaks and such greedy folk should be reserved for the countryside. – *E.A.B.*

A Remarkable Walnut. My walnut tree – I live in Essex – bore in 1929 something like 18,000 nuts. I had 6*d.* a hundred from a dealer, and in these parts 120 go to 100. I also gave quantities away. The tree was so laden that the nuts hung like grapes. Needless to say, several of the boughs were broken off. – *C.L.S.*

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acre – and of drying winds and the alternating of frost and thaw, the soil is thoroughly pulverized and in excellent condition for sowing seed in spring. Obviously, then, the practice is a good one; but is it the best? Most gardeners have noticed that early growth is often poor. This is due partly to the weakness of the sun's rays at that season, but partly also to the fact that much of the soluble plant food in the ground has been washed out of it during the winter. Lawes estimated that the annual loss of nitrogen by drainage and evaporation amounted to 20 lbs. per acre, equivalent to more than a hundredweight of nitrate of soda. Yet by means of what is called green manuring most of this serious loss can be avoided. With the increasing difficulty of getting stable manure green manuring must be adopted. Mustard grows very quickly; it contains a considerable proportion of nitrogen as well as of phosphate and potash; and the seed, which should be sown thickly – say, at the rate of 2 lbs. per square rod – is cheap. It should be dug in before seeding. Weeds can also play a part in green manuring. A thick crop of annuals in autumn, if they are properly treated, may do more good to the land than leaving it vacant. Like mustard, they should be dug in before they seed, and not be held down, raked off and carried away to the rubbish heap. If they are diseased they should not be used for green manuring, but should be burned. – *H. C. Davidson*

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begins to open, and before any trace of pollen appears. I usually then wait a day or so, when I apply to the stigma pollen from another variety: this can be done either with a camel-hair brush or by nipping off an anther with tweezers and rubbing it across the stigma. A large proportion of seed-pods mature seed, and the ripening of this must be watched for, or it will be scattered and lost. Sow the seed as soon as ripe about half an inch apart, in pots, pans or boxes, and place in a cold frame or greenhouse. During winter and spring the tiny plants appear, and after two years in their pots or boxes, should be planted in the open, about 6 inches apart, and there allowed to remain until they flower. Few things I know of are more exciting and enjoyable than to walk round the seedling beds on a fresh spring morning and watch for the new arrivals. A number will be poor things or too much like existing varieties, but here and there one can usually find something novel, and perhaps, once in a while, a great prize. It takes many years' experience to discover the best varieties for use in breeding, the most prolific and those that throw the best class of seedling, so that it is well at the start to consult the vendor of the bulbs, as most of the leading dealers are conversant with the most useful parents, both for seed and pollen. As most of the very varied sections of the Daffodil will interbreed, there is endless scope for the raiser, and even now, in spite of all that has been done, there is new ground to be broken. – *Ornatus*

ON Growing Cox's Orange. 'There's no apple like a Cox' is the opinion of most Englishmen, but one often hears the rider 'but it won't do on my soil'. This matter is worth looking into as one finds Cox's doing well on many and varied soils, the cold clays of Sussex at Billingshurst, on the Kent and Sussex marshes, among the bracken and pine trees at Churt, on the thin soils on chalk in Sussex, Hampshire and other places. What then is this soil on which Cox's will not grow? I am inclined to think that in most cases the fault

Store your fruit and save money!



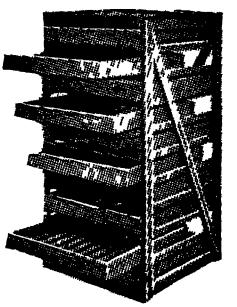
Lack of suitable storage is responsible for the annual loss of 20% of an apple crop. Avoid this loss by storing your apples in the Papworth Fruit Cabinet; you will save its cost the first season.

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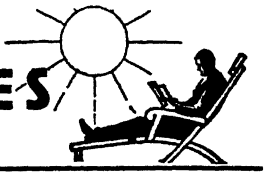
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By Appointment **PAPWORTH INDUSTRIES CAMBRIDGE**
AND ENHAM INDUSTRIES ANDOVER By Appointment

lies not in our soil, but in ourselves. Firstly if Cox is grown as a standard tree it must be very carefully pruned and thinned, sprayed against scab and above all supplied with abundant reserves of potash and phosphate. The last matter is of the first importance in whatever form the tree is grown. Without these two necessities the leaves become poor and thin with a rusted appearance and the edges show a brown margin as if burnt. This we now know is a sure sign of lack of potash and Cox's seem to demand an extra dose. Other more hardy varieties may often be seen growing next to the unhappy Cox in full growth and health. An artificial manure containing a liberal amount of potash and phosphate must be used every year, and should be applied during the months of winter. Secondly, Cox's suffer very severely from scab, and the small spotted and cracked fruit often seen on standards are due to this infection and not to the soil. Spraying or dusting before the blossoms open and after is absolutely necessary in most gardens if clean fruits are to be harvested. For the small garden the cordon is by far the best way of growing choice apples. Its advantages are convenience for spraying and thinning, absence of shading branches, and by summer pruning the scab-bearing young shoots are pruned away and the fruit is therefore cleaner. A young cordon 4 ft. high may bear a dozen fruit and growing 2 feet apart take less room than a row of raspberries. If existing bushes or standards are unhealthy the best way is to cut them hard back, pollarding fashion, and thus force new branches which will be clean and vigorous. This re-making of a tree is not a long process, a standard in four years will be half the size of the tree before cutting hard back. Artificial manure is required here too. Cox's Orange is one of our peculiar national glories, it gains its best flavour only in our cooler climate and keeps longer than elsewhere. A fruit which we can eat from November till May is worth a little extra care. – *E. A. Bunyard*

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Other People's Letters

NO GENTLEMAN. – Your amusing reader in describing English country gentlemen should have said, 'If we find him enjoying himself we know that he has cut a committee meeting, and if he has not cut a committee meeting then we know he is no gentleman.' – *E.B.B.*

FROM A TEACHER IN AFRICA. – Our schoolroom is a cedarwood hut, raised off the ground on piles about two feet high, and nice and airy, as the slats with which it is built do not fit too closely. Our windows are holes in the walls. A hen attends lessons and insists on laying her egg among the atlases. – *R.M.D.*

A NEW USE FOR MILK. – In the village of Tomatin, in the course of a thunderstorm on August 12, the lightning passed by the chimney of a cottage through a bedroom, where it tore down pictures and set the wall paper on fire. A girl was sleeping in the room but was not injured. Her mother, rushing in to see what had happened, saw the blazing wall-paper and snatched up a jug of milk in the room and put out the blaze. – *Inverness-shire*

THE MISSING WILLIAM. – Can any of your numerous readers remember a favourite of ours, called 'William, the little Woodcutter' or 'William, the Woodcutter's little Son'? It was a kind of version of Joseph and his brethren brought up to date, and was embellished by an illustration of a marvellous dog, a peculiar combination of setter, collie, hound and old English sheep. Our horror at the cruelty of the jealous elder brothers, who took William and lost him on the far side of the forest, was only equalled by our joy when Caesar (the noble dog) broke a very thin string by which he was tied up, streaked through the forest, found William in extremis and brought him home. It was our long-suffering nurse who read this noble book to us. I should like to try 'William' on my grandson.–*H.H-S.*

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Tail Corn

WE are giving careful attention to the tastes and requirements of readers as disclosed in the replies on the form enclosed in the April COUNTRYMAN. The problem is fully to allow for the preferences of readers who have not returned their forms! Because a large number of replies must furnish us with definite evidence of readers' predilections we beg all who have not yet returned their forms kindly to do so at once, or, if their forms be lost, to be so kind as to ask for new ones?

THE Democratic candidate for the American Presidency has about twenty cows, grows oats, wheat and rye, and raises a fair amount of fruit.

IT was a commercial traveller, immured in a little market town over the week-end, who described it as 'Hell with the fire out'.

'IN my native town in Wisconsin,' writes a reader of our 'Grave Digger's Diary, 1763–1837,' 'the old sexton of the Jewish cemetery is hard put to it to dig graves in winter in the frozen ground. It is his custom, therefore, in the fall of the year, in attending services at his place of worship, to cast his eye over the congregation and consider which of the aged members of the flock are infirm enough to be likely to die before the Spring. He then covers with a thick layer of autumn leaves the burial plots of those whom he expects to die. The ground does not freeze hard under these leaves and if the owners of these plots pass away and graves have to be dug, the work can be done with less labour.'

Have you Thought of This? — 3

SOME cottage doors are cut in half so that the bottom half can be shut and the top left open. It is as useful a plan as using the angles of landings for cupboards.

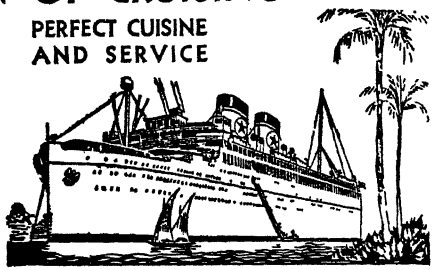
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JANUARY: *to the* **WEST INDIES**

45 DAYS OF HEALTH AND SUNSHINE

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Country Tales

'A little measly talk over neighbours is right enough; it do make the day go by a bit quicker, and sends a body to bed with a chuckle'—*Mrs. Ellis's 'Villager'*

THE other week a rural relieving officer was asked by a woman to speak to her husband who would 'lay awake all night a-swearing.'

ASKED how he liked married life, a newly-married villager in an Eastern county said that 'it's all right if ye put your mind into it'.

LANDLORD, to old countryman who lived on his estate, in a two-roomed cottage, alone with a billy goat: 'Isn't there rather a smell?' Countryman: 'Bless you, sir, billy's learned to put up with that.'

AN extra farm hand was noticed eyeing a ladder. Said the foreman, 'That's a bit heavier than the one you pinched, Ned.' 'I din't pinch un', was the reply; 'I only took un.'

ON Sunday afternoon I wrote postcards calling a committee meeting in our village. Next day the postmaster said to me, 'I han't only delivered one of those postcards of you'rn, master. Y'see, Mrs. Jones always goes to market a-Tuesday. So she couldn't come, and Mr. Brown, well, he'd never be back from his round in time, and Miss Smith and Mr. Robinson are over to D. for old L's funeral.'

WORLDLY Scots farmer in bad harvest weather, to unco-guid neighbour, 'And are ye never worried aboot yer crops in this-like weather, Sandy?' 'Na that, ma frien',' he replied, 'I juist trust in Providence.' 'Umph!' said the worldly one, 'A gey lazy way o' farmin' that.'

IN this issue, under our rule limiting the amount of advertising opposite reading matter, we have been unable to find room in this position for several advertisements. We have also had to hold over some advertising which was to appear in ordinary positions, and we have declined three advertisements which we did not think suitable for THE COUNTRYMAN.



Cheery Optimism

OPTIMISM, when circumstances warrant it, is wholly praiseworthy, but misplaced optimism concerning the continuity of life may have dire results

Every healthy man rightly expects to enjoy a normal tenure of life—but, in fairness to those who are dear to him, he should guard against the possibility of his expectation not being fulfilled by arranging insurances proportionate to his income

¶ Many investments are profitable and many are secure, but insurance *alone* can provide an investment which gives a combination of

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AS ONE COUNTRYMAN TO ANOTHER

By what we have already said, you see our intentions – *Cromwell*

THE J.P. system has so many advantages that it is important to preserve it by making it as efficient as possible. There are many Benches which are insufficiently representative. There are many on which several of the magistrates are past their prime and should be relieved of attendance or removed from the roll for non-attendance or neglect of duty. This could and should be effected, if not by rule, then by the representations of their colleagues or by the Lord Chancellor. Was it not Lord Loreburn who once announced his intention of 'purging the roll'? There are many Benches in which a considerable proportion of the justices are not only out of touch with modern penological principles but ignorant of what happens to the offenders whom they send to prison. Unquestionably there should be a larger number of young justices. And at least two women should be found on every Bench. The system under which additions are now made to the Commission of the Peace could certainly be improved upon: the Advisory Committees undoubtedly vary in quality. With regard to the new magistrates, when they are made, it is the fault of the Lord Chancellors that no steps whatever have been taken to instruct them in their duties and develop their interest in the problems with which they have to deal. A small leaflet could surely be prepared. It is the fault of magistrates themselves when neither they nor their Benches as a whole take the simple step of joining

J.P.s and their Future

There is an idea about that a Big Bank is interested only in Big Business. Is that really the case? Surely, the wide variety of localities in which you can see branches of the Westminster Bank should alone be enough to dispel the notion. To all, a banking account supplies a background—a feeling of stability; and those who may have misgivings about opening one with 'so little' are invited to find that their hesitation may have been groundless

A leaflet outlining the many services offered by the Bank to its customers may be had on asking at any local branch

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the Magistrates' Association. Membership would ensure their being helped to a better understanding of their duties and of the best practice. As to improvements which magistrates could themselves bring about, there should be no difficulty, for example, in refraining from re-electing year after year, chairmen who are inaccessible to new ideas and are not interested enough in their work to become members of the Association. Something is to be said for having more than one deputy-chairman, so that new methods may have a chance. As has been noted in regular contributions to THE COUNTRYMAN dealing with local administration, some Benches are little more than automatic punishing machines. The fit 'word spoken in due season, how good is it' is seldom addressed to defendants or prisoners. In not a few cases, just admonition or wise counsel would be more effective than the penalty inflicted. The other day a thoughtless well-to-do motorist was made to 'feel his position' by some considered words from the Bench which fined him. It is a rare defendant who is not or cannot be made uncomfortable in a police court. There is something lacking in the conduct of Petty Sessions if an accused person who has been found guilty goes away without feeling that he has played the fool and been a bad citizen. People who have been suggesting that offending motorists should be favoured by having their cases taken early or at a special court are wrong. The way of persons who have broken the law should be disagreeable. Incidentally, the notion that motorists do not ordinarily get fair treatment from Benches which are neces-

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sarily composed of people all or nearly all of whom have motors is absurd. We are virtually all motorists now. A person fined in what is commonly and erroneously called a 'trivial' case, say for riding a bicycle without a light, should be made to understand that he has been inconsiderate of other users of the road, has broken a necessary law, has selfishly put the county, that is the ratepayers, his neighbours, to expense, and has, quite possibly, contributed to what might have been a serious, even fatal accident. It is not only in faithful and intelligent legal administration that the country Bench can exert an influence. A Bench is or ought to be composed of some of the most honoured and most able men and women in its district. Benches are held in respect and their judgments are well reported in the county papers. A good Bench usually means a better police force, and the frame of mind of the country policeman, whether superintendent, sergeant or constable, means a great deal in the villages. A Bench's painstaking and enlightened administration of the licensing laws in the interests alike of the public, the publican and the brewer-owner, may make a marked difference in social conditions. As has been pointed out in THE COUNTRYMAN, a licensing justice's functions are not identical with those of a justice sitting in Petty Sessions. How many justices know this? At a time when there is so much talk of economy in administration the value of the Bench as an unpaid public service is worth remembering. The most may well be made of an institution which is rooted in the national organism and is in repute. The strength of the country

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Bench, whatever some perky London paragraph writers may imagine, is in having public opinion behind it. There is no reason, as far as we can see, why Petty Sessions should not become a more and more valuable factor in rural progress.

BUT Benches can only be what their members make them. As we have already said, there are plenty of justices who have no notion of what actually happens to the men they sentence. These justices do not know, for instance, that a man sent to a month's hard labour is likely to pass his time tranquilly sewing mail bags and may be better fed and housed than when he was at liberty. On some occasions imprisonment is inflicted when a remand in custody for eight days would be the better course. If the mental condition of the prisoner is in doubt, as it must often be, the delay gives an opportunity for enquiry. If he is merely stubborn or stupid and does not realize the gravity of his offence, he will benefit, and probably at the end of the eight days – during which he will merely have been detained, not treated or placed on record as a criminal – he will acknowledge his fault and be fit for freedom on recognizances. Some prisoners and defendants fail to do themselves justice in court. Some Benches might well be a little more leisurely. How few accused men know that if they choose to be tried by a jury, one of the advantages of the plan is that they will have an opportunity of appealing inexpensively? It is incumbent on all magistrates to see that the advantages of the Poor Prisoners' Defence Act are clearly explained to prisoners. On some Benches the magistrates are

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too prone to leave everything in the hands of the clerk. They do not even ensure that the Circulars which the Home Secretary occasionally issues to magistrates, reminding them of their duties and the best method of discharging them, are properly brought to their notice. There are many able and devoted clerks, but there have been cases in which youths who might advantageously have been sent to a Borstal institution have not received its benefits because such a course of action would have given trouble to the clerk. Many magistrates are themselves hazy about the precise character of the Borstal institutions. To these places about nine hundred youths and about a hundred girls were handed over last year to be trained in citizenship. Some justices would no doubt like to talk with someone who had been over a Borstal institution or had had a Borstal training. To these magistrates may we commend a seven and sixpenny book called 'Borstalians' (Hopkinson)? In it an ex-Borstal boy describes, first, his own experiences under restraint, and, then, what he saw and heard and felt in later life when he paid visits to all the Borstal institutions.

NO cases brought at Petty Sessions will call for greater attention from the young magistrate than those having to do with poaching. As he listens he may find it difficult to avoid the view that the system by which licences are issued to carry a gun is badly in need of revision. Smooth bores, air guns or air rifles do not come under the Firearms Act. Therefore anyone who wants to carry a sporting gun can have a licence at the post office for ten

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shillings. There is no restriction as to age or character. A poacher who has had his gun destroyed by the Bench can buy another weapon, and, when his licence runs out, obtain a renewal. A man who has merely a gun in his house does not need a licence at all. The system seems as loose as that under which a man is allowed to drive a motor without being tested for skill. In assessing the moral obliquity of a convicted poacher, justices of experience bear in mind that the sporting instinct may be an element in the conduct of those whose delight it is 'on a shiny night' to seek the rabbit or the pheasant, though probably the desire for financial gain (or food) is seldom absent. Nor will it be possible for a new mind on the Bench not to feel some anxiety concerning the system under which half the people who arrive in gaol find themselves there because of debt or because they have failed to comply with orders which have been made against them by various Benches. The suggestion of collecting fines by instalments, which has been made by an ex-Home Secretary, seems well considered. The new magistrate will do well to take an early opportunity of visiting his local prison. He may be surprised to find it run more on the principles of a mission than a gaol. If he is keen on his job the governor and chaplain, the local Prisoners' Aid Society and certain Home Office Reports which he will hear of, will teach him a thing or two. At Quarter Sessions he is likely to become increasingly interested in the selection of men as visiting justices. Some visiting justices are both old and old-fashioned, and ought to be superseded at the earliest opportunity.

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As It Seems to Some of Us

To be a Seeker is to be the next best Sect to a Finder, and such an one shall every faithful humble Seeker be at the end. Happy Seeker, Happy Finder!
Cromwell

Did Cobbett and Young ever meet?

THE years of Arthur Young's life were between 1741 and 1820. William Cobbett lived between 1762 and 1835. In the spring of 1792, the time that Mrs. Parsons has fixed for her colloquy, Cobbett was thirty and undeveloped and Young was in his prime. Mrs. Parsons no doubt chose her date for the practical reason that she could find no other on which it is likely that the two would have met. In our reading we have found no note of their ever having actually met. Did they meet? Late in 1791, Cobbett came back to England from his six to seven years of soldiering in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and in the late spring of 1792 he left England as an exile under fear of arrest and lived, first in France for a few months, then in America till 1800. In 1797, Young's darling daughter, 'Bobbin', died, and happiness for him died with her. After her death he saw little avoidable company, though from 1793 he had been settled in London as Secretary to the newly formed Board of Agriculture. His melancholy gradually deepened into religious fanaticism. In June, 1810, Cobbett began two years in Newgate Prison. In 1817 he went back to America for two years. Young was totally blind from 1812 to his death in 1820. In March, 1792, Young was writing the last portion of his 'Travels in France,' that is the supplement he called 'On the Revolution in France'. Of

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this his thoughts would naturally have been full at the period Mrs. Parsons has selected for Cobbett's call on him.

Cobbett's Last Days

THE best judges will certainly agree as to the Cobbett letter being authentic, the record of the nerve storm of an angry, autocratic, strained old man. In 'Rural Rides' there is abundant evidence of Cobbett's having been a wise, affectionate, devoted father. The letter is a sad and regrettable document, yet intensely interesting in its racy violence and vehemence. There are wonderful touches, that about Lear's two daughters having some extenuation in husbands' promptings; also the superb, forcible vitriol of 'the scale was pitched too high: a brace of maid-servants and a man with now and then a help parlour, study, dining-room and bedroom fires, besides my lady-cook's blazing work'.

'There must be a Way'

ENCOURAGEMENT for any faltering rural reformer comes from Africa. It is in three sentences in the opening chapter of that out of the common book, 'Men of the Trees', by Richard St. Barbe Baker (Allen and Unwin). The author, after describing the failure of his first efforts with an Equatorial tribe 'who had earned for themselves the name of "Forest Destroyers" ' says: 'I had given long talks at many meetings with them, but apparently the seed had not rooted and no action had resulted. Yet I would not lose hope, for I felt that there must be a way to do this work, and that I

SUNBEAM

'The Supreme Car'

It is worthy of note that the earliest Sunbeam catalogue – published at the dawn of this century – encouraged 'carriage folks' to test the new means of transport. Since, the Sunbeam in developing supreme efficiency, has kept in view also the ideal of making a car worthy of the amenities of our countryside. A good servant, doing its work well, upholding the dignity of the house – that is the Sunbeam. The new Sunbeam models represent perfection in efficiency and comfort, with the new four-speed synchro-mesh gear box and the coachwork – always elegant and distinctive – improved to give more interior space. We shall be happy to send you full particulars. If you already have a Sunbeam may we pass you on a hint from an owner in Cumberland? He has a new Sunbeam but tells us that the old one, after 150,000 miles, is still doing good service on the farm.

16 h.p. and 20 h.p. Sunbeam models range from £695 to £895. Cars will be submitted for inspection and trial at any time by appointment.

THE SUNBEAM MOTOR CAR Co. LTD., WOLVERHAMPTON

London Showrooms: 12, Princes St., Hanover Square, W.1

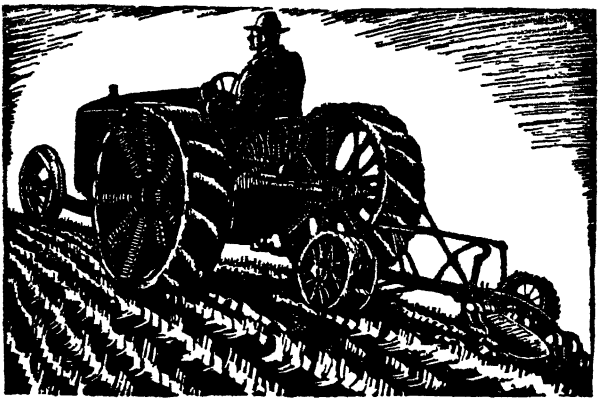
must find it. Something had to be done, and done quickly.' He did find a way, and a few pages later we find him stating that 'over nine million trees were raised by the Watu wa Miti that first year.' It is an outstanding record, eclipsing in its way even those several hundred meetings that Horace Plunkett had to hold before he established his first agricultural co-operative society.

Do as I don't do

WE have been conjured to help 'Drink More Milk' propaganda. We are glad to do so and would be gladder still if there were more Grade A Tuberculin Tested about. But are farmers themselves doing their bit? Has anyone heard a farmer calling for a milk on market day?

The Villains We are

SOMETHING is coming of the vigorous protests against white marble in churchyards, which have been made in successive issues of THE COUNTRYMAN – our readers will remember particularly 'A Monumental Scandal by Fourteen Bishops' – and the recommendations issued by Advisory Committees. Has not a clerical reader received from a firm of marble merchants a circular headed, 'To Those of the Clergy who are Seeking to Prevent the Use of Marble Memorials in Churchyards', and excellent reading every line of it? 'Those who light-heartedly, or for a mere matter of likes or dislikes . . . One does not wish to refer to self-interest, but one is justified in asking who is financing this agitation, because it is not done for nothing.



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SHELL-MEX and B.P. Ltd

If the Government provide the cost one would think the Economy Campaigners should look into it.' Assuredly.

'Camps' and other Mysteries

LONG barrows, tumuli (round barrows and cairns), stone circles, earthen and wooden circles, standing stones, stone rows and stone avenues, camps and ancient villages – everybody may learn to distinguish them and to know something about them by buying a most useful sixpennyworth, 'Field Archaeology, Some Notes for Beginners', just issued by the Ordnance Survey (H.M. Stationery Office), and procurable through any bookseller.

More Honey

IT must be gratifying, at once to the bee and to consumers of honey (who realize how much is to be said from a health point of view for substituting honey for some of the sugar consumed) that British honey is receiving the backing of the Ministry of Agriculture. British honey well made and free from natural taints, such as honey dew, wild onion, garlic or privet, now bears the insignia of the National Mark. Apart from the hygienic argument, there is the economic. Our people could buy more than our present £200,000 worth of British honey. We import twice as much as we produce. A large proportion of the cheap imported article is no doubt needed in trade and manufacture, just as large numbers of cheap foreign eggs are needed; but there is room for an increased British production. So let us buy more National Mark.



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the fascinating 56-page book that's much more than a catalogue.

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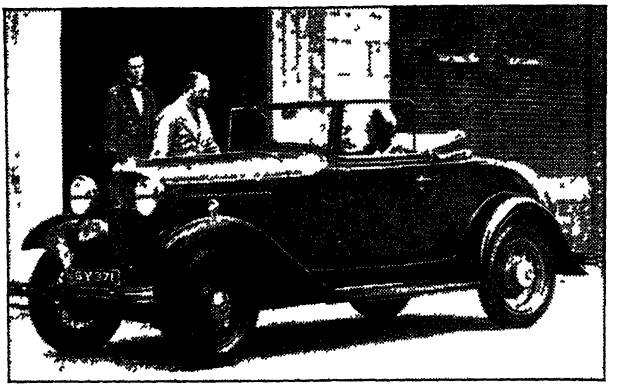
●Have you seen "Morris 1933"—a book you simply must get hold of? Forget what you expect from the conventional catalogue. Here's something new. This book goes deeper than a mere list of new cars. It's packed with live photographs, fine colour pages, diagrams in black and white. From cover to cover it holds your attention. Your copy is at your Morris Dealer; or drop a p.c. direct to Cowley.

The 1933 Morris Range embraces: 7 models and 25 body styles to choose from. Prices £100 — £350.

EPISTLES FROM AN OLD HOMESTEAD

12. *BYGONES*

FOR many years I have been pressing the importance and urgency of village and county museums as repositories of things appertaining to the rural life that has passed or is passing away. For villages what could be better than such a cottage museum as that established by Sir Stafford Cripps at Filkins or the Westmill museum concerning which the late Mr. Guy Ewing wrote? On a larger scale there is the remarkable collection of 'Bygones' in the National Museum of Wales at Cardiff. Not far away at Hereford, Mr. F. C. Morgan, of the local museum and art gallery, has gathered together as many as two hundred obsolete farm implements. Writing to me of some of his other possessions he says: 'One is a two-man-power corn mill. The upper stone revolved as the men turned the handles and the flour came out through a leaden lip. In a fifteenth century MS. you can see a mill of the same pattern. We have the bean dibber used by Shadrach Best, of Shottery, the champion bean setter for the county of Warwick. With his weighted dibber he could set 1¾ acres of beans a day. Three boys were needed to drop the beans into the holes. A wooden plough of beautiful design is a relic of the craftsmanship of the Troths who were ploughmakers for generations. A bullock wagon pole and two yokes, found when a local farmer moved, had probably been made on his farm 150 years ago. The ox wagon pole is the unit in the rod, pole or perch table of long measure. At one farm I found an iron hinge of a



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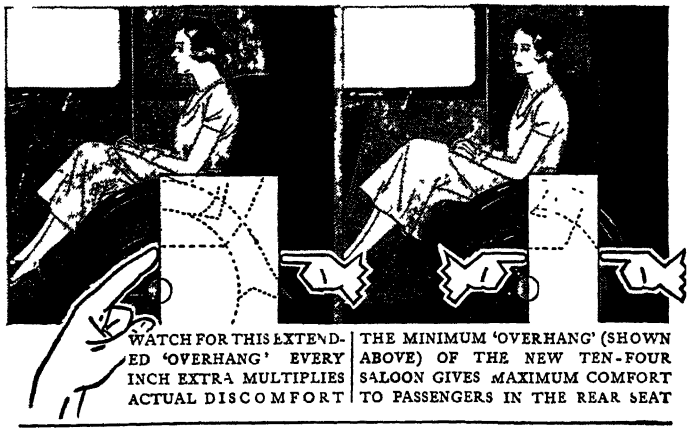
FORD MOTOR COMPANY LIMITED
88 REGENT STREET, LONDON, W.1 · DAGENHAM, ESSEX
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barn dating from the twelfth century. A local archaeologist recently discovered a wooden hay fork'.

IN the museum there is also a 'bush' used when the ceremony of burning the bush was performed on New Year's day before sunrise. The wagoners took a wisp of straw and tried to run over thirteen reens or furrows of wheat before it went out. If they succeeded it was thought that there would be a good harvest. In Warwickshire a boy was engaged by the villagers to watch until the last sheaf was taken from the field. He then went round the village blowing a horn and led the way for the gleaners or 'leasers', as they were called. A solid cartwheel dating from the thirteenth or fourteenth century is the museum's earliest memorial to the wheelwright's trade. Kent has just started an agricultural museum in the beautiful Old Tithe Barn, actually the Guest House at Maidstone. Very sensibly, circulars are being sent out asking for the kind of 'bygones' that are wanted.

BUT in the starting of country museums do not let us forget the value of village museums. They are more easily started than might be supposed. In many villages there is an inhabitant who, above all others, cares about old things, and is generally made the recipient of them. In one Warwickshire village I have been speaking with such a collector. William (as I shall call him) had his smaller treasures in a 15th century oak chest. 'Bought it in the village for 30*s*.,' he said. The first thing he showed me was a sugar-cutter. 'Goes back to the days when all

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sugar came over in big lumps and you had to cut it off as you wanted it. 18th century, perhaps earlier. There's a better pair still in the village. Here's a coin-tester; it weighed as well as measured'. Then came an Elizabethan ruff-maker, like a dinner-plate. Beech. 'The old lady who had it told me that her grandmother would never eat off anything else.' The rest of the set 'all went for firewood'. As we bent over a farmer's wooden-framed contraption with six tines and wooden handles, William said it was what was called a 'skerry'. 'Did the work of a scuffler. The wooden handles had to be depressed or lifted according to the depth required.' 'This bentle,' he went on, pointing to another wooden-framed implement with five small shares, 'was in use in the parish in my boyhood.' He took to pieces a neat little press for two cream cheeses. 'When it was filled,' he said, 'they buried it in the earth to keep the cheeses sweet.' From the loft he brought down what he called a sawney. This was a stick bent into a scythe-like shape; its use was in lifting laid corn for it to be cut with the sickle. Last year William organized for the village an exhibition of old implements and utensils. There were flails and ox-yokes – 'oxen', wrote Fitzherbert in 1534, 'wyl plowe in tough cley and upon hylly grounde, where-as a horse wyll stande styll' – a home-made plough and a witch's cauldron, complete with three legs, three chains to hang it from a hook, and a wooden ladle. There was tradition to vouch for it. I am told that at least two other villages in the county have stories of reputed witches within living memory. – *Solomon Wiseacre*

Bathe in the Sun!

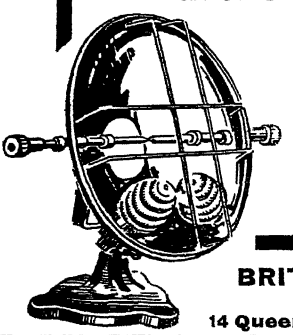
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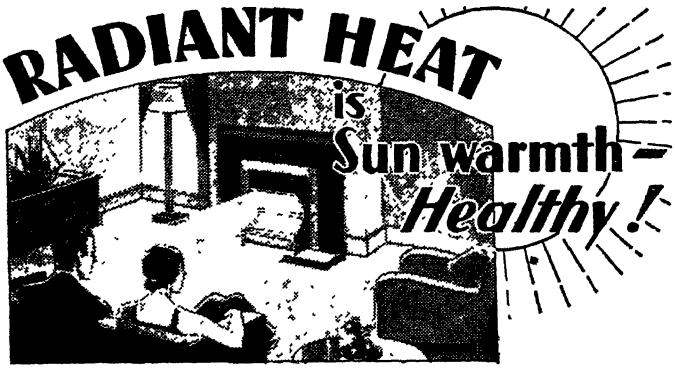
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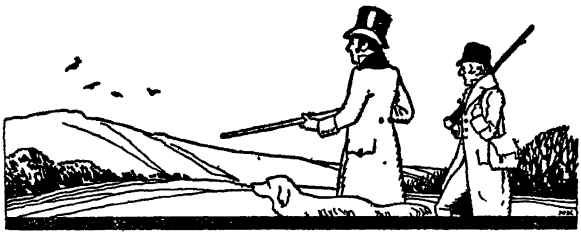


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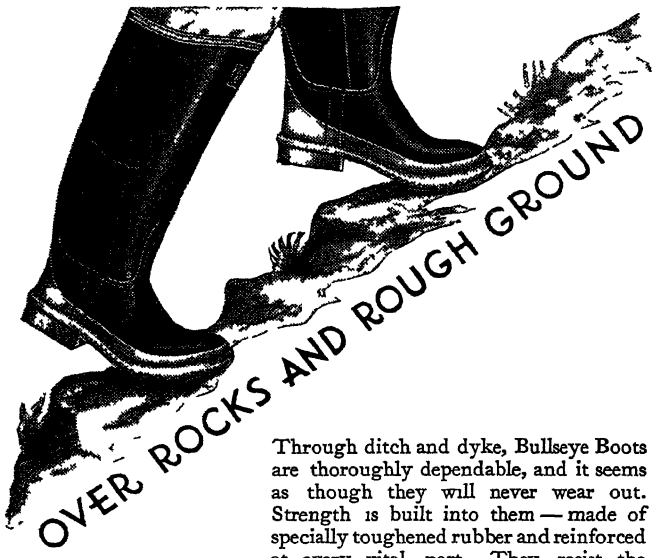
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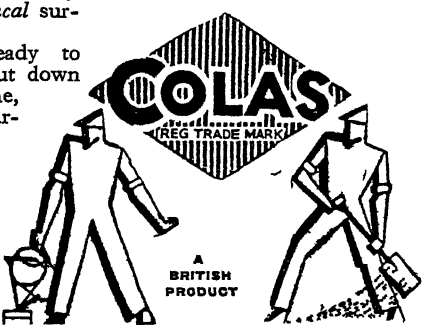
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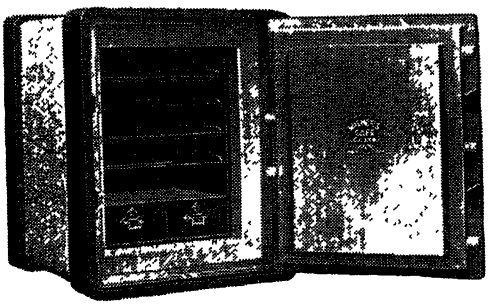
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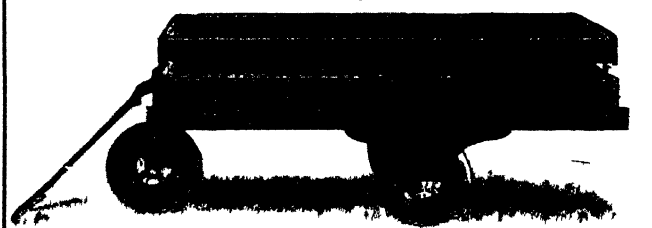
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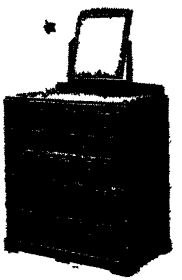
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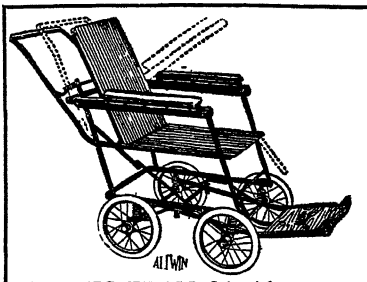
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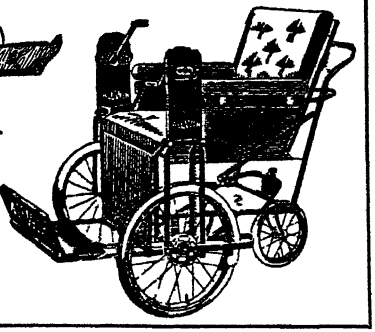
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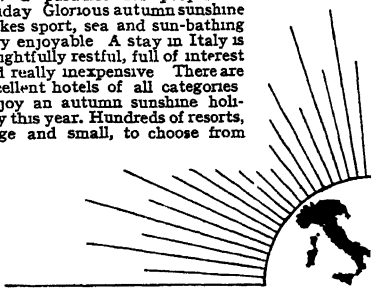
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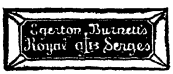
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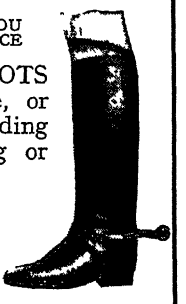
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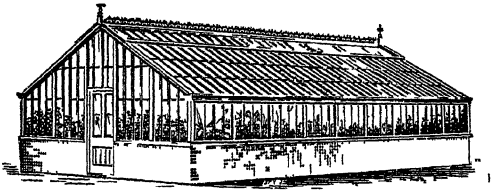




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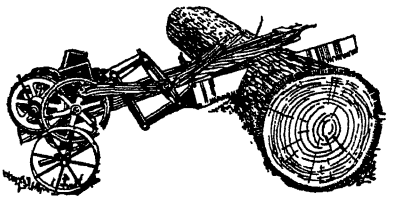
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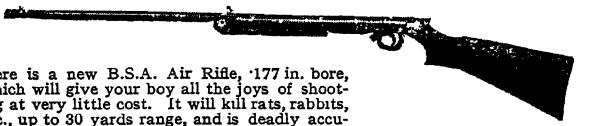
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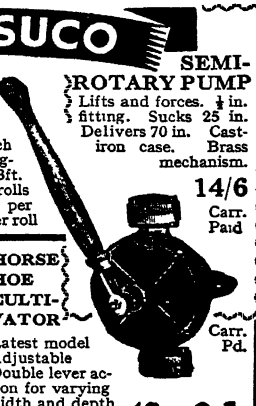
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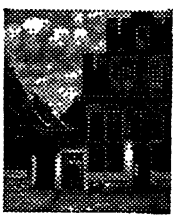
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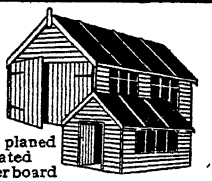
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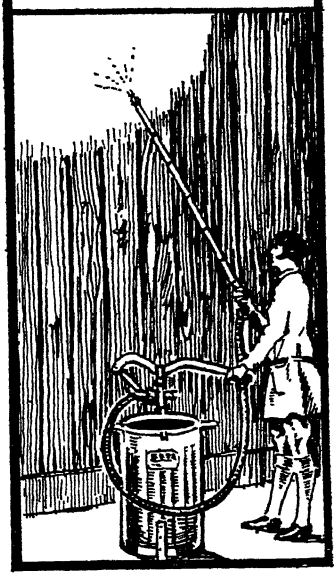
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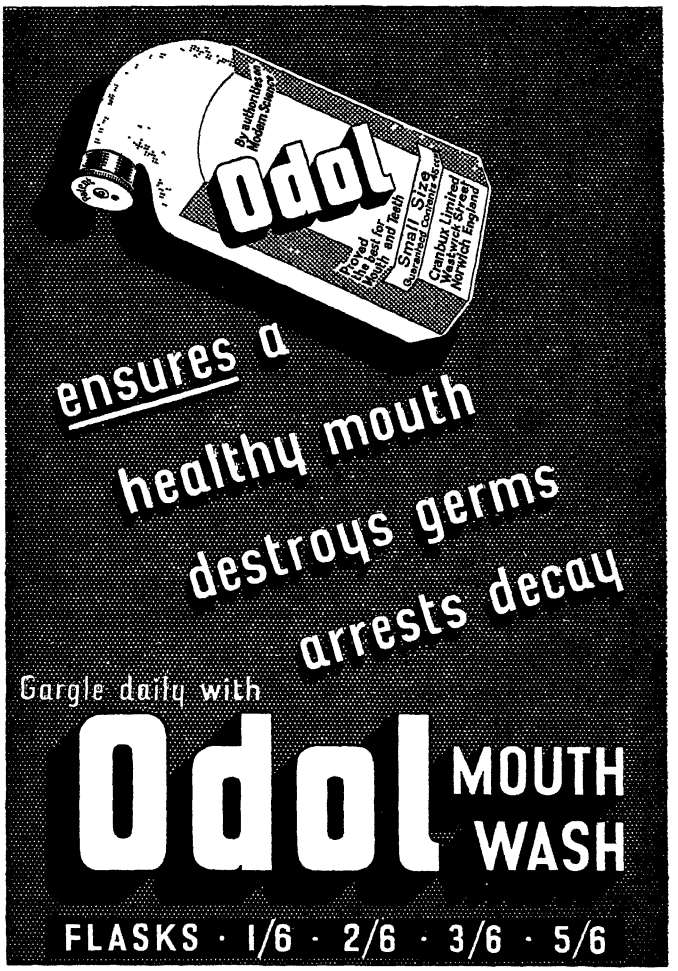
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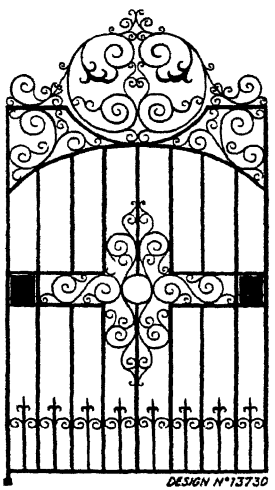
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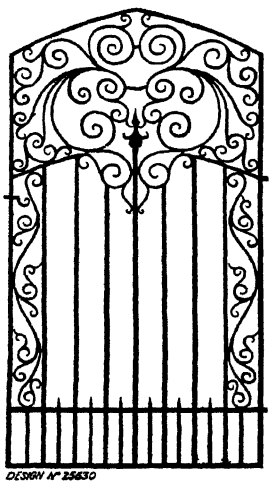
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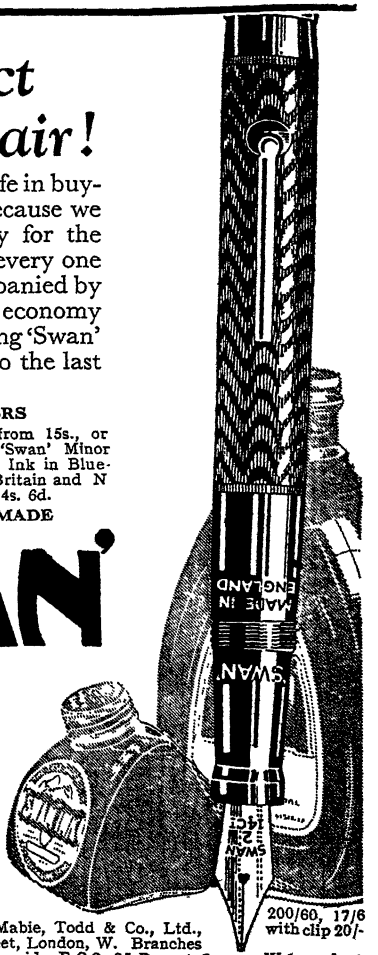
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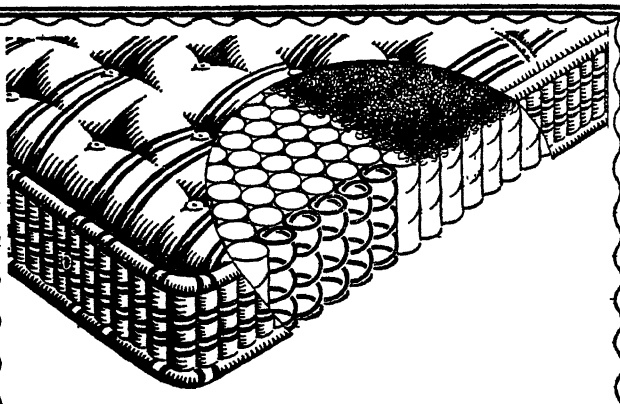
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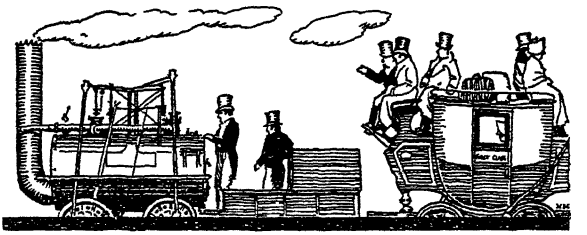
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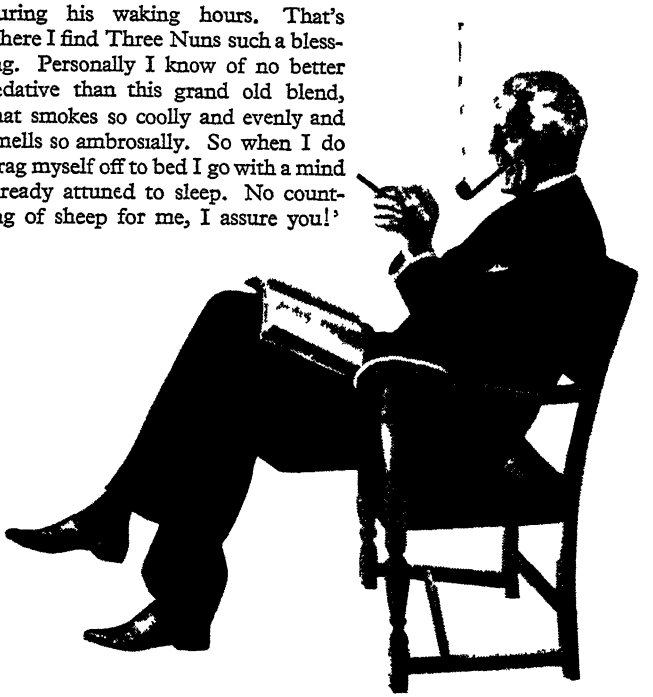
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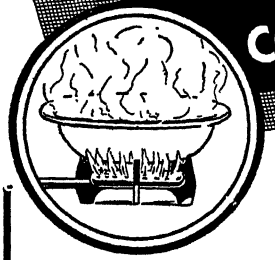
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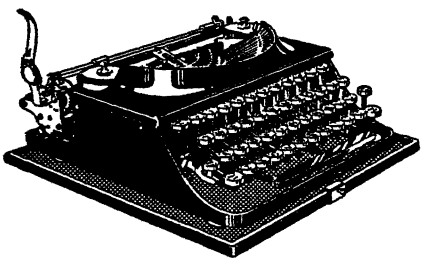
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The Countryman

A Quarterly Non-Party Review and Miscellany of Rural Life and Industry

Edited and Published by J. W. Robertson Scott at Idbury, Kingham, Oxfordshire

INST AGR.

The best citizens spring from the cultivators—*Cato* Speak to the earth and it shall teach thee—*Job* O more than happy countryman if only he knew his good fortune!—*Virgil*

Vol. VI. No. 4 2*s.* 6*d.* quarterly January 1933

My Spiders

by the Marquess of Tavistock

SPIDERS are among the most harmless and interesting of the smaller animals – they are not insects – and are certainly among the most useful to us. Few, if any, even of the tropical species, possess the venomous properties with which they are credited. I should not like to assert definitely that all spiders are incapable of inflicting a dangerous bite, or unwilling to do so under provocation; but the unpleasant aptitudes ascribed to the Italian tarantula are, for all practical purposes, mythical, and even the huge and forbidding American 'bird-eating' spiders can be handled gently almost with impunity.

Certain foreign spiders provide examples of protective mimicry unsurpassed, even in the insect world, in strangeness and perfection; with some kinds the males perform a courtship display as

striking as that of birds; while strange and elaborate uses of the web for insect-catching reach their climax in the methods of an Australian spider which fishes in the air for moths by casting with one leg a line with a drop of sticky secretion on the end of it!

Some of our own British spiders are not unskilled in protective mimicry. One small orb weaver, not uncommon in gardens, and often found on yew bushes, has its abdomen strangely formed and coloured to resemble the dark portion of a bird's dropping; and to heighten the illusion it arranges some streaks of whitish silk immediately below where it sits in the centre of its web. The same or another species, when slightly alarmed, begins to shake its web so violently that it disappears in a blur of invisibility.

These actions are to be attributed to instinct rather than to deliberate reason, but a spider is not wholly devoid of intelligence, nor is it the automaton that some scientists assert. A few years ago I read in a scientific book that if an orb-weaving spider be interrupted in the construction of its web it is unable to finish its work and is obliged to begin the whole process again from the start, first laying the outside framework, and then constructing the spokes and finishing with the sticky cross meshes. To put this assertion to the test I interrupted in the middle of her web-making a half-grown specimen of a little pinkish-grey orb weaver, common on the walls of houses. After the custom of her race when frightened, she dropped from her web, feigning death, but left a communication line by which to re-

ascend. When her fears subsided, up she came, spent a few minutes in performing her toilet and then set herself to complete her unfinished work. *She* was not going to be labelled an automaton, anyhow! Under normal conditions the females of this spider live for about a year, the males dying after the breeding season in their first autumn and taking very little food after they become sexually mature. The young hatch about May and are fully grown in late summer or early autumn. After mating, the females deposit a cocoonful of eggs and in rather poor condition prepare for winter, spinning webs in the hope of catching a stray insect during every spell of mild weather. With the return of spring and better feeding they fatten up again, but nature is remorseless in requiring further maternal duties, and as soon as they are plump and strong a further batch of eggs is deposited, usually leaving them too weak to spin again. As an experiment I once tried to prolong the life of a female by feeding her on dead flies until she regained sufficient strength and condition to make her own living. As a result she laid, at intervals, five lots of eggs and survived until the early autumn of her second year, when she disappeared and, I have little doubt, died. A certain proportion of the eggs in her last cocoons were infertile.

The same species of spider and a little ichneumon fly figured in an amusing incident I once witnessed. The ichneumon, though a very tiny and slender insect, was equipped with a pair of sharp jaws and ability to use them to some purpose in an emergency. She was flying about in a myrtle bush when she

chanced to blunder into one of the numerous spiders' webs hanging in all directions. Out rushed the spider, counting on an easy prey; snap went the ichneumon's jaws on her enemy's front foot, causing the latter to back off hastily. With a few wrenches and bites at the detaining threads, the ichneumon had cut herself free, only to fall plump into the web of the spider immediately below. Out came the owner of this web, snap went the ichneumon's jaws on *her* foot too; a few more struggles and the ichneumon sailed off in triumph, leaving two extremely discomfited spiders ruefully sucking their bleeding 'thumbs'. The whole tableau lasted about fifteen seconds only!

Critics of spiders are fond of commenting adversely on the alleged habit of the females of devouring their often smaller and weaker husbands. Certainly cannibalism is common in the spider world, and death may overtake a too venturesome suitor, but it is a gross libel to call the occurrence common. In very many species the females are quite gentle to their partners, and with those inclined to be hasty when dinner is late the experienced males are too well aware of danger to take unnecessary risks. I have often watched with amusement the approaches of a little male spider to his large and voracious lady. He endeavours to soothe her by continually pulling and shaking the web, a proceeding which one might have thought more likely to irritate than charm the fair one, but presumably he knows what he is about. If they get to close quarters and she is inclined to be aggressive he backs away, trying to keep her at arm's length, and saying as plainly as anything by

the language of touch 'Now, now, my dear, pray be calm; I am *not* a fly and I really do admire you immensely!'

Male spiders appear to possess the power of discovering, at great distances, potential brides, rather after the amazing fashion of certain male moths. The moment the female is ready to mate the male arrives, apparently from nowhere. Quite recently an immature female of a rather rare spider established herself in a room in my house, an unusual situation for an outdoor species. Immediately after her last moult, however, a male arrived, spent three days with her, disappeared, and, rather to my surprise, returned to her again a fortnight later.

Certain spiders, like certain birds and mammals, have adapted themselves with strange exclusiveness to man's handiwork. There is a rather large spider, related to the garden spider, which makes its home in tarred fences and tarred wooden buildings and is never, apparently, found anywhere else. Not only is its colour blackish, like tar, but its body is strangely flattened and adapted to the narrow crevices which are found between boards and in iron railings. Is this natural or 'unnatural' selection?

Another little spider appears to live exclusively in the flower and seed heads of rhododendrons, where it constructs an irregular web of threads running in all directions. The rhododendron is not a native British plant. Where did it live before there were rhododendrons in Britain, and what did the tarred fence spider do before there were modern fences and tar? Moreover how does the tarred fence

spider reach (as it often does) the only tarred fence or building within miles of untarred country?

The common house spider, owner of a flat, sheet-like web, is, in many ways, an interesting creature. In the first place it may live for several years and in certain localities is capable of attaining an enormous size. The largest I ever saw used to live in the back premises of the college boathouse at Eton. I should be sorry to guess their exact measurements without a specimen, for fear of being put down as a romancer, but they were enormous: I never dreamed that such spiders existed outside the tropics. After I was grown up I returned and captured a pair. The female was only of normal size but the male was a real big fellow. He was in every way a perfect gentleman. He had a very small appetite and treated his mate with much gentleness; indeed when I returned him to her after he had got loose in the room for some days he seemed quite pleased to see her, quivering his abdomen and settling down contentedly beside her.

Owing to the nature of their haunts, house spiders have to be content with few and scanty meals. It is said that they can live without eating for nearly two years, and although I have never been brutal enough to impose a test fast, it is certainly the fact that captive specimens can go without eating for two months, not only without much loss of condition, but with benefit to their health.

A peculiarity of the house spider is its inveterate wanderlust – a fact which should be borne in mind by anyone who keeps a specimen in captivity. They need very roomy quarters, and, if possible, a

change of quarters. Most animals are attracted to a place where the food supply is plentiful: not so the house spider. Feed a wild specimen until she is plump and portly, and within a week or two you will find her web empty. Nothing has disturbed her, but a restless instinct has driven her forth from the land of plenty to wander where meals are scanty and watches in the web-mouth long and vain.

(To be continued)

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The Difficulties of Rural Writing

by Henry Williamson

BY rural writing I mean the kind of books I myself have recently written, 'The Village Book' and its sequel, 'The Labouring Life' (which is a very bad title). The difficulties are personal difficulties. The first or chief difficulty is to get at the truth of any human action. I do not see that it is possible to be impartial when writing about one's neighbours. You may dislike a particular man for years; he may seem to have a prize-fighter's face and no humanity. Then something happens: you perceive he is not without grace, charm, sensibility. He becomes human. You become his friend. After a while he is a thoroughly decent fellow, much superior to the man for whom your liking is not so pronounced, the fellow who put your wall up badly, and overcharged you.

The author of a village history will probably say it is a good book, while those who dislike him will certainly say it is full of lies and caricatures. If the author has a glimmering of sense he will exclude

all that he has written in criticism of his neighbours, especially if he feels a sense of his own moral superiority. Again, how to discern between his prejudices and what he believes to be true? The modern trick of writing with what looks like impartiality may conceal his prejudices, but they will be there. For example, see the account of a thing I wrote ten years ago. It was intended to be the most truthful account ever written—there it is, Chapter 1 of 'The Village Book'—but is it true? I have many qualms to-day. I actively hated what at that time seemed to me to be cruelty and insensibility: I was there to show it up. The one true feeling I had was a desire to make something out of what I had seen and heard.

The point, as far as I am concerned with myself and all that the search for truth entails, is that the sooner one abandons any ideas of direct truth the better for one's life and work; for if such ideas don't lead to Tom o'Bedlam's land, they certainly make a waste place of one's life. The late Bernard Gilbert attempted to write the truth about his neighbours, and it broke his back. In the uncompleted 'Old England' series, there is a monumental warning how not to write. When the poor fellow, for instance, wanted to write the truth about market day, he tried to get everything down on paper; and he devised a method of writing dialogue in tiers or layers, one above the other on the printed page—several people talking at once in the bus going to market—everything they said, repetitions as well, and all talking at the same time. But how about the market place, or the High Street? Why not three hundred voices

going at once, with three hundred tiers of dialogue?

The seeker, or would-be grasper of Truth, serves himself, or his Art, for awhile in the wilderness; but in the wilderness there are no roots. In the wilderness, too, one learns to see the normal life, left behind, through a mirage. Bernard Gilbert's characters, like many of those of Mr. T. F. Powys, are not true or normal characters. The commonplace or fiction-market writer, following along the high road to the magazines and libraries, often writes less untruly than the lesser saints who have been trained in the wilderness of reaction. The commonplace

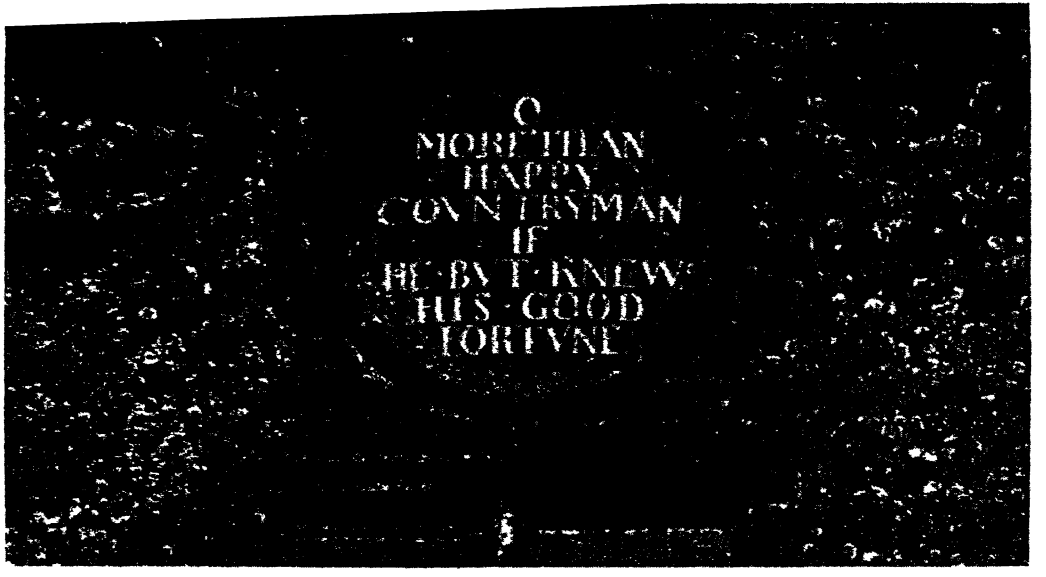


HENRY WILLIAMSON AND HIS WIFE
In their boat in the Taw and Torridge estuary, the scene of 'The Pathway'

writer will create a villain, and then win the reader's facile sympathy by making the villain do something noble towards the end of the story; even so, such feeble art is less untrue to life than the consistent villains of better writers.

I am, or was, a wilderness writer; but I have had to unlearn what I learnt in the wilderness. When I began to see the scapegoat bones by the wayside, and the sanded horizon apparently melting in swooning air, yet remaining static in its barren leagues, I hurried back, hoping it was not too late to lose myself among the sheep once more.

While yet in the wilderness of my illusions I began to write 'The Village Book'; and although fatigued from the conception and writing of the four novels ending with 'The Pathway', I still felt I had the power to write a new truth, to transmute, by the ardour of vision, sand into air ascending. Now that I have finished the job—which, after all, was done by means of a pen and paper, and was pretty hard and often tedious work—I wish that I had perceived before the only truth that I can now accept: the truth that Truth is not so much a vision of reformation as an understanding of things as they are. Have I, for example, written truly about the character called the Rector? I call him an imaginary character, because I have manipulated him, for the purposes of fiction, while writing the various stories in which he appears. Therefore the character is a Williamson-rector; the Rector is not, by reason of the manipulation, a truthful portrait of any living man. At the same time it would be contemptible and dishonest to deny that the character is based



A STUDY IN LICHEN ON 'THE COUNTRYMAN' OFFICE
The lichen is a species of Placodium. The lettering follows that on the tomb of Christopher Wren's foreman in the neighbouring Burford Church

upon the incumbent of the village where I lived for several years. It is based upon the late Rector of the village; and the other characters are based upon living people, too.

When I said above that I wished I had returned from the wilderness before I began 'The Village Book', I meant that as man and writer I would like to be as the sun, which divines the true or inner nature of living things. When the rain drifts grey and cold in winter, when the north-east wind dries the lanes and withers fields and gardens, when the frost racks earth and water in agony, then it is not seemly to seek Truth; but when the sun shines, there is a Being which unlocks and discovers the spirit of man or beast. The sun is entirely truthful; the sun sees no shadows.

It is possible, by a sun-like understanding, to discover among the crotchety and cantankerous, among the so-called cruel and vicious, the same person as oneself: the human being which has grown from a child to its present shape, and in its heart still has the solar innocence of the child. To be like the sun is to see all things plain, and to draw all like to oneself.

For Countrymen and Countrywomen – 24

1. From what eminence in England may one look into fifteen counties? – 2. Which of our Kings had a fox which came into his Queen's bedroom? – 3. Which of the prophets was a tender of fruit? – 4. How many insects are there? – 5. What is the weight of the lettuce eaten in this country in a year? – 6. Give two lines from an Elizabethan poet on beet.

My Cottage Garden—3

by Sir Austen Chamberlain

IT is astonishing how much there is to say about a small Alpine garden. I have yet to deal with my screes, for in the end there were two of them, one less exposed to the full sunshine than the other. Both contained more chips than earth (indeed, I suppose the proportion was at least as ten to one) with limestone and granite mixed in varying proportions. Obviously the scree is the place for the Kabschia and Engleria saxifrages and many other treasures. Here, too, I grew Drabas, Hutchinsia alpina, Ranunculus Seguieri, a lovely thing, Geranium Pylzowianum, to be watched closely lest it spread too far; its clear pink flowers prolong your flowering season. Papaver alpinum, orange and white, and Linaria alpina flourished in the scree and seeded regularly. Wahlenbergia Pumilio with its grey leaves and lovely purple flowers sitting close down to the ground was another favourite, easily increased by cuttings. In the scree too I tried Omphalodes Lucillae with its grey-blue leaves and feathery tufts of forget-me-not flowers of the palest porcelain blue shot with pink lights. The precise spot between two rocks had been specially made for it by an expert, but it slowly faded away. Then I found that admirable gardener, Mr. Hay of the Royal Parks, growing it as a bedding-out plant! He was kind enough to give me some plants and reveal the secret of his success – stiff loam and well-rotted cowdung. Yet the plant comes from the hot

limestone mountains of Greece and Asia Minor. To the four things which the compiler of the Book of Proverbs did not understand, he would, had he been a gardener, have added a fifth: the way of rock plants in cultivation. The best plant of Douglasia Vitaliana, a peat lover, which I ever had, grew into a fat cushion five or six inches across from a tiny slip which in ignorance or absent-mindedness I planted at the head of my limestone scree. Indeed I am disposed to say that whilst the scree is no place for any coarse thing, it is worth while to try in it any precious plant which has refused to do elsewhere.

It is a great advantage if you can water Alpines and especially the scree plants from below. In their native haunts, some sit in crevices on a steep rock-face where no rain lies and draw their moisture from the cool stones into which their roots penetrate deeply. Others sleep all winter under deep snow. They burst into life and blossom with amazing rapidity when the snows melt, but all through the hot summer their roots draw moisture from the water trickling just below the surface of the ground. In this country it is not possible to reproduce these conditions exactly; the raw damp days of February when the air is cold and laden with moisture are apt to be particularly deadly, especially to plants with hairy leaves. But something may be done to lesson their trials; a sheet of glass in winter is not a pretty object, but it is not at that time that you take your friends to admire your rock garden and the gardener in those months may well decide that safety first is his appropriate slogan whatever it may be for a political party. In any case let him try underground

watering. If he has the conveniences or does not mind the cost, let him lay a leaden water-pipe with a few pin-prick holes in it under his garden. If, like me, he has not the convenience and is unwilling to face the expense, there is a simple alternative within everyone's means. Get a few two-inch agricultural drain-pipes; sink them vertically in the ground till their tops are only an inch or less above the surface, and hide them with a rock – the only one allowed to lie loose on the surface – or by a larger plant and, when watering, turn the hose or the spout of your watering-can down the pipe. A little care in the disposal of a few stones and some chips under the pipe will ensure the proper flow of the water and you can water at any time without danger of sunburn or of rotting out the crown of the plants. Incidentally, if you have not a convenient or sufficient rain-water tank and are dependent on the water company's mains, your water percolating through the soil will be more palatable to the plants.

Here you have the outstanding features of a rock garden as I conceive it. It will of course need larger patches of colour to prevent it looking patchy. For these you can choose the dwarf Phloxes and Iris, the finer Aquilegias, the mossy Saxifrages, Anemones, Aubrietias, Helianthemums and the like. Once the garden is started, fill in gradually with other plants acquired from friends or growers (you need never pay more than a few pence except for special rarities) or best of all plants collected by yourself. In a short time you will be searching for space in which to bestow some newly acquired treasure and will be thinking which plant you will sacrifice to make room.

A word about collecting. In these days, if he can afford a trip to Switzerland, anyone can reach the Alpine plants, however poor a walker he is. I was past sixty before I saw the Alps in early summer and, coming straight from heavy office work, I was in no trim for climbing. Yet there were in my garden many plants which I had myself collected with Dr. Correvon or other friends in the week's holiday which I used to take after the sitting of the Council of the League of Nations in early June. Not an hour from Geneva I found a white Cyclamen europaeum which Dr. Correvon in all his rambles in the Alps and elsewhere had never lit upon. Another day he took me a drive along what is called the International Route (for it crosses the Franco-Swiss frontier more than once) and showed me a grassy slope where every outcrop of rock had its patches of Daphne Cneorum. I had other glorious days with him in the Jura and yet others at Zermatt where the Professor of Botany at the University of Lausanne kindly made himself our guide. We went up to the top of the Görnergratch by train and before I could take my eyes from the glorious panorama of snow peaks and glaciers, he had found me a piece of Eritrichium nanum, the heart's desire of every Alpine grower. As we walked down, we passed through all the seasons from the places where the snow still lay in half-melted patches through which the earliest flowers were just peeping till we reached high summer in the meadows of the valley. That day I first saw Androsace glacialis and next day the Professor showed me a spot where the scarce Asplenium septentrionale was to be found.



From a photograph lent by Jonathan Cape

MARY WEBB AS A DICKENS CHARACTER

Of course I had my disappointments. I lost my E. nanum by too much coddling when at home and neglect when I was absent. (I saw a capital piece only the other day growing in a stone trough in scree mixture in Sir Clive Wigram's garden at the foot of the Round Tower at Windsor Castle) but the Asplenium grew well in a crevice where it had Penstemon Davidsoni for neighbour and the majority of my plants lived.

For collector's tools, a fern trowel with a long blade not more than one and a half inches wide and so firmly fixed *in* the handle that it will give you good leverage and an Alpine ice-axe suffice. If any of the plants are short of fibrous root, plunge them in a bed of wet sand placed in the shade. It is amazing what root they will then make in a few weeks.

Reluctantly I end, for even to write of these bygone delights is itself a pleasure.

There are few joys like a garden and the Alpine garden is par excellence the garden for the amateur.

P.S. A cure for sleeplessness. If you find that after the worries and excitements of a busy day, say after winding up a debate in Parliament at midnight, you are too excited to sleep when you reach your bed, if then counting sheep passing through a gate proves as with me of no avail and you share my incapacity for thinking of nothing, visit your rock garden in imagination. I have put myself to sleep night after night in this way before my head had been five minutes on the pillow or I had covered six paces of my small garden.

My Island and Our Life There

7. Our Birds, by R. M. Lockley

How the author came into possession of an island off the Welsh coast, full of wild birds and flowers, how he found treasure-trove in the wreck of an abandoned schooner; how after building a house out of the wreck, he brought his bride – this having been told, Mr. Lockley has been recording the experiences of himself, his wife and little daughter. In our present issue he breaks off to describe the island's remarkable bird-life, of which he is such a well-equipped student.

OUR island lies beyond any point of land. There is no guiding cape or finger of land jutting towards it, as with the sister islands of Skomer and Ramsey. For this reason every bird we get is a migrant, not a day-visitor on the forage. Rooks, daws and starlings find it convenient to slip over to Skomer for the day, but if they come to us they come to stay, or else to pass on at once to the next refuelling station in the great migration merry-go-round. (It is now proved that a large number of species return in spring by a different route from that used in the autumn.)

In winter I have my own starling-roost. Each night I mark my starlings hastening to the razorbill ledges on the cliffs by the Stack. They go there before sunset and wheel about a great deal before settling down. The smaller passerines roost in deep heather and dead grass; wrens and hedge-sparrows creep into rabbit-holes or into the deserted nests of the storm-petrels. The coast is left clear for the

night-feeding population. Snipe leave the bog-grass in hundreds and come to feed by every rill and damp corner, and with them many woodcock and curlew, and grey and green plover. The widgeon come whistling in from nowhere, with quacking mallard and teal, until the ponds are black with their troops and the water as muddy as a burn in spate. Not a square yard of the ground about the main pond but is trampled and printed by a thousand webbed feet, for by now the birds must know that our island is their only sanctuary in a noted game county. All night they feed and tread over the bog; in the morning I go out and marvel at the evidence, and my delight is even greater when I see the broad-web imprints and the grass-green droppings of the wild geese. Little owls are abroad, too, and many water-rails, both species capable of raising weird cries in the depths of the night, as well as by day.

The birds give us a pleasure that is at once possessive, friendly, and absorbing. The joy of possession is emphasized on an island; every bird that flies to our shores is instantly labelled ours, no matter if it merely rests a moment and then flies on. In this way we have emissaries in all countries north, south, east and west of us. As for the resident birds, such as the ravens, falcons and buzzards, stonechats, dunnocks and pipits, they have long learnt that we are harmless, merely a pair of clumsy, flightless *homo sapiens* nesting in the old house on the island. In winter small birds constantly enter the house, often for shelter, more often, I suspect, out of a hungry curiosity. In summer the starlings scutter

about the eaves, pretending they will nest, but always flying away in the end to more civilized parts. The swallows, however, stay and build, as do the pied wagtails. At night the slates are visited by amorous shearwaters, whose caterwauling and claw-scratching is an imitation of what goes on on suburban roofs. But in a previous COUNTRYMAN I have already described bird life in the small hours. Let me not forget Mr. Puffin, who has increased of late years until he has now colonized the whole island. His townships number among them over ten thousand population. A decent sober bird this, who goes to bed with the sun and gets up reasonably early. For all the gravity of his white waistcoat and velvet-black dinner jacket, he is the comic fellow of the island. With his rainbow bill, his clown's eye, his grey pate and his red gaiters, he is himself alone. You know, of course, his absurd habit of dancing a slow jig, one foot after another, a melancholy sort of one-step. You are compelled to laugh when several puffins begin this plodding, while the rest of the vast meeting gaze quizzically upon them. You will soon notice that they enjoy the joke as well, for one after another the whole colony of puffins, some deep in their holes, will begin a deep, throaty, aldermanic chuckle, 'Ah . . . ha . . . ha.' It rolls around from one colony to another, in and out of holes, and is often taken up by puffins resting on the sea, so that you never hear the end of what must have been an amazingly satisfying piece of puffin-humour. Thank goodness for Mr. Puffin to cheer a dismal day.

There have been rare exceptions to the rule of

migrants and residents only. The tree-creeper which visited us in July could only be called an adventurous wanderer. Discovering no trees, it used the rough granulations of the cliff in South Haven as it would the bark of a tree, and seemed to find plenty of insects in the crannies. A coal-titmouse in December was equally adventuring. So was the only tit that has ever visited us. It stayed many days, finding chrysalids and spiders aplenty under walls and eaves. The golden-crested wren in October may have been a true migrant – for I have seen them on Grassholm – but it was a very fragile thing to be clinging to the bracken-stalks in a high wind. A lesser whitethroat was both a record-maker and a lost soul in a November storm, months after its kin had reached Africa. A northern guillemot which was found in the home meadow a quarter-mile from the sea, had dropped there out of sheer exhaustion in a gale, having long been suffering from oil-waste on its plumage. Twice now in the spring have sparrows looked in upon us, ambitious cocks which have chirped in vain for mates to join them, and finally retired in despair. Once a woodpigeon flew in upon us. Its manner betrayed alarm and bewilderment, as well it might, for what had we to offer the fat, sleek creature, of trees and corn and clover? It flew off quickly, I hope before our falcons saw it. Another bird of the forest was the crossbill that perched on the garden wall one morning in July. There had been an invasion of the British Isles by this species, one of those periodic waves of emigration caused by over-population in Europe, and this solitary bird represented the farthest west achieved in England and Wales. The

meadow-pipits which nested in our garden were furious about it, and chased the strange-looking bird right off the island. A sparrow-hawk in August found good hunting among our small birds, and, uninvited, stayed the month out, taking up his quarters in North Haven. In like manner, but far more welcome, a white owl came to spend November with us, and rid us of some of our mice. It was almost hand-tame and made a favourable impression by clearing the mice out of the Wheelhouse and occupying it instead. Then one day it vanished, returned to the mainland, I supposed, but later I found its dismembered corpse beneath a pile of wire-netting. Had it got entangled or merely died of a surfeit of mice? At any rate the mice had their revenge on the body, having torn every vestige of its tough flesh from the bones and feathers! (They devour almost anything in winter, and are particularly fond of the composition buttons on our oil-skins.)

The little ortolan which came to us in June was quite exhausted and did not at all remind me of a gourmet's delicacy. For a long time it took refuge in that ornithological holy of holies, our garden, until at last it was strong enough to fly out again into the sky – whither, who can tell? I know the charming little wanderer took with it something of our hearts, as did the one gorgeous hoopoe which landed on the garden wall one May-day morning. Restless tropical bird, our hoopoe was not still for one moment, flying here and there, and, at each alighting, throwing erect its wonderful sulphur crest. To visualize this beauty, imagine the progeny of a jay

mated to a great spotted woodpecker, for the hoopoe has the brilliance of both, and the swooping flight also. I followed it from rock to rock about the island, but it would not accept my eager advances, and at last flew down below the inaccessible cliffs, where I could not follow.

These are the strangers of note which have wandered to our lonely shore. A few sedentary, tree-loving birds have never ventured so far. Hungry for all species, we miss the titmice, all varieties, and the magpies and jays which abound on the mainland of Wales. The magpies come as far as Martynshaven in winter, but will not cross the sea, nor will the kingfishers and woodpeckers, though both these birds have travelled to the edge of Jack Sound. When I look through the list of 115 species which I have recorded on the island I feel I cannot grumble at the absence of a few old friends. Have I not a unique selection to take their place, a special migration of white wagtails, black redstarts, whimbrel, bar-tailed godwits, little auks, and sooty shearwaters, which is not observed on the mainland?

Turning now to the small beasts which inhabit the island, it is somewhat surprising that we do not possess mole, vole or shrew. In common with many another island, Skomer has a vole peculiar to itself, differing in size and dentition from the common field-vole. I am glad we haven't one, though if I listened to all my acclimatization-mad friends the island would by now be a miniature Whipsnade, bristling with voles, moles, shrews, badgers, foxes, wild cats, hedgehogs, even snakes and guinea-pigs. I have had to refuse sanctuary to whole menageries

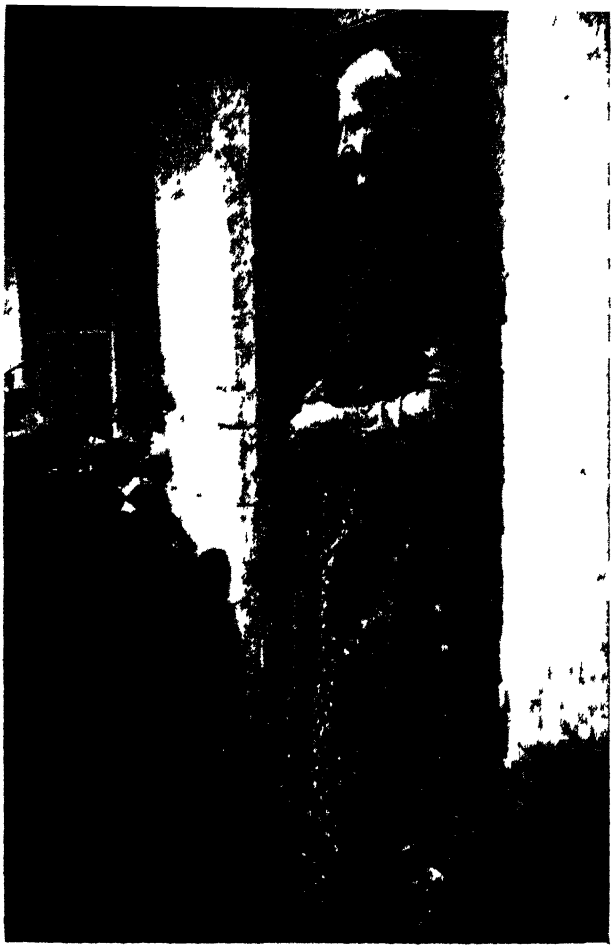
of people's pets. Good Heavens, badgers would spend their nights digging out puffins and shearwaters, foxes would devour my rabbits, hedgehogs would suck the birds' eggs, moles would swallow up my scanty supply of worms, and voles are notorious for spoiling good pasture. As for shrews, I sometimes think we will sail over to Lundy Island and catch a few of the pigmy variety which inhabit this our nearest land to the south-east. Yet I am nervous about taking the plunge, for although shrews live on slugs, woodlice, and earwigs, they may also fancy my newts and nestling birds.

The introduction of mice has been a very grievous thing as it is. Mus musculus, common house mouse, voracious villain, was brought to the island accidentally about thirty years ago. The then tenant of the island wished to carry a colt over from the mainland, and overnight prepared his boat at Martynshaven, laying down a great bed of straw for the young animal to lie upon. Here the method of carrying heavy stock in a boat is first to throw them in upon their backs with the four legs tied together. Four men are needed, one to hold the head, one to hold a noose around the forelegs, and one a noose around the hind-legs, and a fourth to place a stout plank under the belly and resting on the gunwale of the boat, alongside which the animal is first placed. The man with the plank, at a word, levers the beast up, so that it rolls over into the boat upside down, the nooses automatically drawing tight. The beast is not allowed to raise its head from the straw until the four legs are lashed together. As a rule it lies very quietly on its bed, unless the job has been done in a



'IN A GOO

The old lady on the right, who 'had come down in the world', was great healthy children, and as she said, after delivering clothes, which she carri was an amusing talker, and said to her photographer, 'They say twins



L' OLD AGE'

ly respected. The purposeful ıroner, on the left, was the mother of seventeen 'd on her head, she often called for the midwife to return home with her. She i about badly this year'.

slovenly manner, as happened on one notable occasion, when a pony going to Skomer freed one leg and kicked the side of the boat out for its master.

It was a wonder that rats as well as mice were not imported by that negligent farmer who left his boat packed with straw on Martynshaven beach on that fateful evening. An eye-witness has since told me that when, the next day, they unloaded the boat in the harbour of our island, the colt, in getting up, kicked the straw about until several mice darted out and were lost immediately in the crannies in the island cliffs. In three years they colonized the whole island, spreading to every corner, in summer living a life of plenty in the pastures; in winter suffering from hunger, cold, and flood, save those, and they come in scores, which fatten on our crumbs.

Rats swarm on Lundy and on Ramsey, and on many lonely islands. They are said to have come there from wrecks. I wonder. Skokholm and Skomer have had scores of wrecks, yet never a rat has landed. When I ask the fishermen why, they speak of rats forsaking a vessel long before she founders. They also tell a tale about the only rat known to have reached Skomer. As it sprang from the boat on to the island beach, it was slain with a pebble cleverly aimed by the outraged farmer, and they declare it was a narrow squeak in more ways than one because the creature proved to be a gravid doe!

In Elizabethan times our island was famed for its 'great store of conies', as it is now and doubtless ever will be. For one thing, there are no stoats or weasels to decimate them. All interference comes

from above, gulls devouring many young rabbits. The puffins and shearwaters do no damage; they cause inconvenience by occupying the burrows in the height of the breeding season from March to August. After that the rabbits have things all their own way underground. So much indeed do they rely on safety below ground that nothing will induce them to bolt. I have experimented with every sort of humane contrivance for catching them, in an endeavour to find a substitute for the steel trap. Pumping poisonous gas merely resulted in their dying in the depths, 'at their posts', so to speak. Muzzled ferrets failed in like manner. They came up with their claws full of rabbit-fur, they had been scratching the backs of the insensate conies! At first thought, this might seem utter stupidity on the part of the rabbits; but any local rabbit-catcher will tell you that our island rabbits are, on the contrary, far more cunning than the mainlanders, and are capable of staying in their burrows without moving for two weeks if they smell and hear traps being laid outside. As for all the new humane snares and contrivances, I have tried every one, and so far I am sorry to say haven't been able to catch a single rabbit, the fault being that they are all too clumsy and conspicuous, an insult to a coney's intelligence in fact. Fine wire snares, laid in the grass and heather, are the only really efficient means of catching the island rabbits.

Seals, rabbits, and mice are our wild mammals, and I must add another, for at rare intervals we see a minute bat fluttering about, so insignificant that it can be none other than the whiskered bat. Once

only on a still summer evening, did a pipistrelle venture across the ocean to us. It may be worth adding that, owing to the mild air, bats in Pembrokeshire are on the wing throughout the winter, often in brilliant sunshine during the short days.

There are no snakes, but on fine days we see slow-worms basking in the sun, especially on the hot slopes of South Haven. Finally there are newts and frogs. Both I have had examined in the vain hope that they might be a race peculiar to the island. Toads and lizards are on the list of creatures to be imported at the first opportunity as harmless, nay, beneficial.

(*To be continued*)

LORD AND LADY BLEDISLOE AND MAORI CHIEFS AND POI DANCERS



The Caged Wild Bird Scandal

by Lord Howard of Penrith

Two and a half years ago, strolling on a warm May morning along the main street of the beautiful little Tuscan town of San Gemignano, my pleasure in being back in Italy in spring was spoilt. Outside most windows of the houses there were hung on nails small wooden cages, perhaps eight inches square, in which were various small birds, for the most part chaffinches and goldfinches. Those on the sunny side of the street were exposed to the full heat of the sun and were panting and gasping, evidently suffering considerably. I thought of all the thousands of birds in Italy which were probably gasping and panting in small cages in the heat. I had no doubt that the owners of these birds had no intention of being cruel, but cruelty there undoubtedly was. On arriving in Rome I spoke to my old friend, Dr. Axel Munthe, author of the now world famous 'Story of San Michele', about this, knowing how much he had done for the protection of wild birds in Capri. I told him that, before attempting to do anything to mitigate this evil in Italy, I would first find out how things were in England. I found that, by English law, the shooting and snaring of all wild birds during a particular season or close time of the year, from March 1 to August 1, is prohibited, and that offering for sale or having in possession after March 15 any wild bird recently killed or taken is prohibited up to July 31. The close season for

some birds, that is game birds, is more extended. The provisions of the various Acts for the protection of birds are quite complicated, and, in particular, the words 'recently killed' or 'taken' have, as one might suppose, given rise to different interpretations. As to the caging of wild birds, the only provision is contained in the law of May 28, 1925, which lays down that it is illegal to confine a bird in any cage or other receptacle not large enough to permit the bird freely to stretch its wings. Therefore, wild birds may be taken (though certain methods of capture such as by bird lime, with decoys, etc., are prohibited) any time between August 1 and March 1, and may be exposed for sale and sold, even during the close season, provided they are not 'recently caught', at any time during the year.

Having got so far in my investigations, and being, I confess, far from reassured or satisfied, I determined to see what was the actual condition of the trade in live wild birds. I had already been horrified to read in a publication called the 'Cage Birds Annual', issued by the Cage Bird Society, instructions how to feed almost every possible wild bird, such as wrens, common and, I think, golden crested; tits of all kinds, thrushes and blackbirds, all kinds of finches, robins, larks, nightingales, water ousels, etc. I visited last spring, the annual show of cage birds at the Crystal Palace, and found there, besides hundreds of beautiful cage-bred canaries which had never known what it is to be free, scores of ordinary finches of all kinds, robins, larks, one or two wrens, a nightingale

or two, and one or two woodpeckers, etc. These poor little creatures, pent up in cages for the most part just large enough to enable them to flap their wings, were making frantic efforts to escape through the bars. They were evidently quite wild and should have come under the description of 'recently captured', if that means anything at all.

After this, one Sunday in July, wishing to probe the business to the bottom, I went with my friend Dr. Munthe, and a young lady from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, to visit Club Row in Bethnal Green, where there is a market every Sunday morning for the sale of live wild birds. We were horrified. In the midst of a crowd so dense that it was difficult to elbow one's way through were set up in the middle of the street twenty or thirty trestle tables, piled four or five or six high with small cages each containing a little victim, struggling to be free. There were larks, finches, buntings and linnets and many others, and there was every sign of their having been 'recently caught'. But who could prove that?

As soon as we bought – in order to free it later – one of these little terrified creatures, it was put into an old cardboard box or a paper bag with breathing holes in it, and another bird was fished out of a wooden box beside the dealer, which evidently contained numbers more, and placed into the empty cage.

All these birds had probably been caught in the course of the previous week. Dr. Munthe and I left Club Row with the feeling that there was little to choose between Italy and England.

Village Gossip

by Joyce M. Westrup

THE village chimneys gossip
each to each,
intricate speech
echoed in smoke across a listening sky.

Idly intent I hear,
first muttered, and then clear,
the news that Mrs. Brown
is slacking down,
and Mrs. Jones
burns bones.
These sparks like gold bees swarming
murmur that someone's warming
at stolen chestnut palings
('what use was they old railings?')
but smoke clouds come
from drear and drum
legitimate elder boughs
(virtue allows
its own reward).
Green ash smoke on the air
hangs like an incense rare
before the Lord.
Pine wood
smells good
and brings a whiff of the old cat's fur
(she sits too close for pine wood to please *her!*)

As noon approaches, conversation grows
too swift for all but a discerning nose,

and the wide intermezzine chimneyed sky
swirls thick with noun and adjective let fly
from prolix pots and pans so garrulous
that subtler points are lost to fools like us
who only know,
as whispers throng and grow,
that Mr. Smith has taken
more than one slice of bacon
for dinner, and the street
finds onions hard to beat.

Bonfires and violets – oddly at grips
with a rich commentary on fish and chips.



AGAINST A NOVEMBER SKY

My Tenth Year's Farming

IN his opening article* our contributor explained that he belonged to 'a class of men, of a certain social position, with more or less private means, who farm some land of their own, men to whom their holding represents a part of their livelihood. These people get from their farm a self-supporting home, a certain amount of food, often some firing, always an occupation, generally a little cash. So the thing is worth while.' Now we have the pleasure of printing his report on his tenth year.

LAST year, Michaelmas 1931 to Michaelmas 1932, there was a profit of £156. This was the cash turnover. Rent which, as owner, I do not pay, was not charged, so there was a real loss. Considering the farm as an investment, this was more than made good to me by the fact that the farm gives a home, a lot of food and various services. I am not giving accounts now. There are some 39 acres of corn unthreshed. (I notice Adrian Bell always writes 'thrash'.) I never felt less able to estimate the value of unthreshed corn, so with this result still in doubt, I feel accounts would be of little value. I am leaving them over to the next number of THE COUNTRYMAN. The total year's working will, I hope, come out no worse than 1930-31.

I *make a Start with Pigs.* I started keeping pigs last Michaelmas. As I do not see the best way of bringing this new line into the farm accounts I have decided this year to treat it as a separate account altogether. I had some

* July 1928: I buy my Farm and tackle the Labour Problem. October: Problems of Income Tax, Dairy Cows and Rabbits. January, 1929: My Stock and my Grass. April: Machinery and Implements. July: The Farm on its Feet. January, 1930: My Seventh Year. January, 1931: What I learnt taught. January, 1932: Tractors.

success with keeping pigs before I came to my present farm. I believe pigs never pay as a side line. They must be taken very seriously. To this end I built what I considered the ideal piggery for my purpose and climate. It cost some £300. It is made of oak framing very substantially sheeted with one-inch elm creosoted, roofed with best English asbestos cement corrugated sheets. It faces south and is well lighted and ventilated. There are six pens, 10ft. by 10ft., and six 5ft. by 10ft. (with a food house 15ft. by 10ft. in the middle) floored with two-inch elm board, not nailed but keeping place by its own weight (I blow the rats out from underneath with the tractor exhaust from time to time). At the back of the pens there is a feeding passage 3ft. 6in. wide the whole length, and in front outside is a concrete run 5ft. wide, also the whole length. This can be shut off so as to give each pen an outside run and dunging place, which the pigs use and so keep their pens clean. At the end of the house are some four acres of grass divided into two pig-proof paddocks and so arranged with gates that any desired number of pens can be opened to one of the paddocks, so enabling breeding stock to run to grass at will. Water is laid on to the feeding house and the grass paddocks.

I do not ring any pigs. I think free rooting is good for breeding stock, and it is my experience that old pasture, however much rooted, can always be harrowed, limed and rested with, perhaps, a little oats and grass seed scattered over it, and it comes back quite well. It is not the feeding value of the grass that matters, although this is always something, but the exercise and fun of running free and rooting about that does the breeding pig so much good.

My feeding is based on sharps and a little soya bean meal with mineral. I further use green stuffs such as kale, swedes, etc., barley maize and wheat, according to what I have and what is cheap.

I have tried selling porkers to butchers in the market, also baconers direct to the curers. On the average, I like best

selling to Harris's. I think they ought to give me more, but though you may strike lucky elsewhere, on the average they are as good, and they are not fair-weather buyers. When pigs are ready they will clear them within a week at current price, which is a point worth considering. I think people like Harris's should be very glad to see farmers setting about breeding good pigs (and their buyer tells me my pigs are some of the best he has seen about). They should do all they can to encourage breeders like myself.

I decided to start by buying pigs. I used to go to market, note down the pens of young pigs I liked and put top prices on them, leaving a lorry contractor to bid, and, if bought, to bring the pigs home. I bought eight to twelve week pigs at from 8s. 6d. to £1, mostly round 15s. I bought three pedigree gilts. I have not registered them. I do not want pedigree pigs as such – mine are large white – but I like the shape of those I bought and the price was right. I bought a very nice pedigree boar from the County Farm Institute. I picked from my market pigs a few of the best gilts showing large white type. Now for accounts:

	£
Bought 136 pigs	125
Foods, including farm wheat and barley	295
Extra labour direct for pigs and various sundries, say	15
	£435
Sold 115 pigs all told	300
Balance	£135

Average selling price, about 9s. 3d. a score, dressed carcase weight

This £135 represents the cost to me of the following pigs now on hand: 30 stores growing into baconers, one gilt with first litter of 11 pigs, 10 in-pig gilts, all due in the next two months. If sold to-day these would just about fetch the £135, so I can say I have neither made nor lost. Actually

these pigs could not be got for the money because they are all carefully selected, healthy and quiet, and to obtain such a foundation wants doing and has to be paid for.

Pigs on these lines obviously do not pay. It will be noticed that there is no allowance for depreciation of buildings – none ought to be needed for some time – or, in its stead, rent ; and no labour. This I do not feel because, having given up all horses but one, the question of absorbing the spare time available has in effect given me the pig labour free. I pay £2 a quarter for the extra Sunday work which shows in the above amounts. Straw bedding I reckon free, as the resulting dung well pays for it. Of the £295 shown for foods, £38 represents home foods, that is barley, tail corn etc., ground up. I said at the end of my last year's trading that the farm position was generally strengthened; some of this strength has been cashed in to feed the pigs, and so the pigs give a visible profit of this £38. It is extraordinarily difficult to give a lucid, fair account of the finances of a year's working on a farm. I want to show and to know the real pig position. In future, I shall count the pigs as a part of the permanent farm stock. Their increase or decrease will be considered as a weakening or strengthening of the farm general position, their profits or losses shown in the general farm accounts.

THE National Pig Scheme. I am delighted with the Pig Report. I quite agree with the wisdom of leaving out the pork side. This, no doubt, will be attended to later on. Bacon is the main opening for our pig expansion. The Report proposes entirely novel conditions, and until we are at home with those new conditions we are wise to concentrate on one line. I can see certain inherent defects which will have to be dealt with, but they will not show immediately, probably not for two years.

We want immediate action and with a powerful Government we ought to have it. I'm sick of Party scores. I can never quite forgive an opposition to Addison's Bill which put the farmers off it. After all, Gilmour had to accept most

of it. We are suffering from an inferiority complex about our agriculture, quite wrongly. In my humble opinion, we are the best agriculturists in the world. When we get down to pigs as a serious industry we shall, I am sure, rapidly overtake the world. We have a far better climate and general conditions much more favourable than the Danes.

I have a firm belief that the small mixed farm like mine is in all ways the most suitable and economical unit for us. I think my pig results – not that they are much to boast of this year – go to confirm this. I hope the Government will get some credit scheme going so that every mixed farm can have a suitable set of houses for pig-breeding and feeding. It is no good playing with pigs. I reckon, roughly, that every mixed farm could turn out some two or three baconers per year per acre without any additional overhead expenses beyond foods, and a lot of these would be grown like kale, etc. In cost of production it will always beat the theoretically efficient mass production pig establishment. There is one danger in the Pig Commission's Scheme, and it can be averted.

As soon as pigs look like being a paying business there will be a rush into production. The ordinary mixed farmer, whose straw and organization and possibilities of growing cheap green and other foods make him the most economical and in all ways a desirable producer, the farmer who can give the personal oversight, which is such a big factor in efficient production, has not the capital resources or farm buildings to jump into serious production unaided. We are suffering from a sort of mass production complex. Further, there are business men with a desire and the money to play at agriculture on a large scale. I fear that encouragement will be unduly given to the mass production of pigs. In two years' time we shall be flooded with pigs, with an undue proportion from mass production sources. There will have to be restrictions on the home production. The really efficient mixed farmer producer will not have

got going, and vested interests in mass production piggeries will demand and get terms which make things all right for them. The relatively few mixed farmers who have got going will do extremely well, but not only will the nation be drawing pigs from its second best source of production, the mixed farmer will lose the general advantage to his farm of a fairly heavy output of pigs.

MILK and the Milk Distributor. I should have been up in my milk gallonage this year, but, owing to the very low price, I tried to economize on foods and rather upset the cows. The year's gallonage was 12,326 against 12,933 the year before, and it sold for £549 against £686 – less by £137. This loss would have been greater had I not been able to change over to the Wholesale Co-operative Society in April and so lessen the incidence of the United Dairies' prices. The year's average price for me was 10.61d. per gallon against 1s. 0.75d. the year before. It is very frequently said in the papers that the farmers would be well advised to clean up their herds, improve the quality of their milk, etc. etc. I should like to point out that in the first place they are doing a lot in that direction, but the matter is essentially out of their hands. The wholesalers force the price of milk down as low as they can and mostly buy anything that comes up to standard as far as richness goes. They talk to the public about clean milk, but cleanliness is a matter of cash. Having established a clean herd as to health and clean organization, as I have, to keep it up does not seriously affect cost. I am



THE OLD STORY *From the 'Herald'*

inclined to think it actually pays best to have healthy cows and scrap all doubtful ones. Robust cows do better and in the end cost less for upkeep. But it costs money to get a sound herd together, and to keep it up with losing milk prices requires cash capital to fill the loss. Secondly, and perhaps this is the most serious side of starvation milk prices, when the farmers are producing milk at a loss, and must have cash for current expenses, the only way to carry on is to sell all calves and sell the milk which would be required for rearing. This means depleting the herd of the necessary home-bred replacements, or, where replacements are bought, carrying on with the old cows or cows showing signs of failing health. It may sometimes mean buying a cheap screw. The thoughtless say the farmers grumble but still carry on so cannot be doing so badly. One might put it this way, that the wholesalers' increased profits (including hidden reserves?) have largely been paid out of the decreasing health of the dairy herds of the country. Until milk prices are based on cost of production in an efficient herd, which would not be so difficult to do as it sounds, and not, as at present, just as the lowest price the wholesalers can force the farmers to take, there is little chance of gain in the general health of our herds.

There is yet another evil in the pure profit-seeking of milk distributors. More and more are they seeking milk in the remote places where it is cheap. This milk is collected in local depots, pasteurised, brought to London in large tanks and often again pasteurised. When the public get it, it is a preserved liquid which is not milk any longer as anyone who keeps a cow for his own supply, knows milk. The sanitary arrangements and water supply of these remote farms does not get such supervision as can be given to the more accessible farms. It is to be hoped that, in the public interest, the reorganization of our milk supply, suggested by the Commission, will involve London and the large centres getting their milk from the nearest sources as fresh as possible, leaving remote milk for local use and manufacture. Further it is

to be hoped that a real effort will be made to get an increasing supply of unpasteurised milk for general use. Apart from health considerations, the fresher milk is the pleasanter to the taste; so fresh milk will tend to increase sales.

HAY. I cut twenty-five acres only. A lot of hay was left over from last year and one rick from the year before. It is no use making hay to store indefinitely and it is impossible to sell it. The hay crop was not so heavy as usual but sufficient, so that does not matter. I gave the men cider for the hay and harvest, instead of the usual beer. They liked it as much and it is cheaper. But I was chiefly moved to make my protest this way against the patriotic brewers who threatened the Government if the beer tax were not reduced at a time when, admittedly, a lot of hardship was being caused by cuts to balance the Budget. I wish some farmer, more up to the details than I am, would show up the fiction the brewers always seem to get away with at farmers' meetings, that the tax on beer hurts the farmer. They have bled the malt and hop farmers by paying less than the cost of production.

GRAZING. It has been an excellent grazing year. My fields were all undergrazed. I topped all once and some twice. With the tractor this was possible. I noticed the cattle eat up the cuttings, even weeds. They seem to like the cuttings mixed in mouthfuls with growing grass. I should not like to half-feed my fields every year, but for once I do not suppose much harm has been done and the general economic position made any other course unwise.

ROOTS and Cattle. It has been an excellent root year. I never had better, and they have not cost unduly. I have five acres of kale and swedes and one of mangolds. I tried cutting down the mangold and increasing the kale and swedes, as these are a cheaper crop to grow. The acre of mangolds gave forty-six good loads, roughly tons. Here I

may mention, as to cattle, that the home-bred replacements have come in and the least desirable have been sold out.

CORN. I had seven acres of wheat, twenty of barley and twelve of oats. This was the corn suited to this year's farming, and I did not alter it to hunt the wheat subsidy. Those who are saying how the combines have increased omit to point the moral. They are growing up in numbers under the shelter of a subsidy which proves nothing as to their merits for us. I believe they are part of a system of farming quite unsuited to us and only possible with a corn subsidy, which is the worst way of spending money on agriculture.

My corn crops, till about mid-June, were a picture. Then storm after storm laid them. They somewhat recovered after the first, then went down worse than ever. The wheat survived fairly well, being cut early, but the spring oats went down absolutely flat and were grown in. The weather for the wheat harvest was good, but the oats and barley were drenched and drenched and drenched again in the stooks, and were finally put up in the Dutch barns half-wet. If I had had to rick them I do not know what I should have done.

THE Year as a Whole. Looking back over the year, I can say things have turned out better than I expected. Until the corn is sold the actual position is uncertain, but that much is certain. Year after year I have written, 'The general position is strengthened.' I have drawn on this reserve strength to some extent in buying no artificials, and using up all the little accumulations of corn I usually carry. These latter may be replaced after threshing. The lack of artificials is more or less covered by a little mountain of pig manure, and the steady gain my system of keeping the cows in a covered yard in winter at night gives in extra dung. So the reserves used up are probably replaced in another form. With pigs established and another year of the persistent high farming I practise in a general way, I can say that the general

position is strengthened this year again. As a farmer paying rent and having to live, I should have lost some £100 on rent, and, say, £100 would be required as cash living expenses. Say £200 behind for the year.

HOW Farmers Stand. I was talking this point of view over with a neighbour. I said that a working farmer would perhaps spend less than I do on labour and perhaps effect other savings and so come out about square. He replied that he was not at all sure that anything could be saved in my labour, that even a farmer and three sons, that is four men, would not get through the work. He declared that the farm could not be run more efficiently by a working farmer; further, that my position was roughly that of most farmers. They had been going back yearly for some years, meeting the loss by hoping for better prices and borrowing from the banks, running into debt to traders, using up some little cash resources or letting the farms go back. That is the position. Each individual farmer has to pretend while grumbling in a general way that he is doing all right or just getting along. He wants to keep up appearances to his creditors. Now all are worn down. Pretence is over. Except for those with other resources than their farms the game is up. One wonders what will happen. I am of course generalizing. A few are still sound but a very few. The bad part of the present position is that to-day things are so bad, the land and buildings have been so let go to meet current expenses, that it will take money and time to get things round again. One wonders how much actual slipping back will be allowed to take place before we have a real policy. I feel the pig plan has promise but the wheat quota was a lamentable bit of expensive patching, as was the sugar beet subsidy. A co-ordinated policy is still lacking.

THE Possibilities. I find that, in round figures, I have produced for the year, for sale, over 12,000 gallons of milk, 12,200 lb. of pork, 5,000 lb. of beef and veal, and some

35 tons of corn. This, with the labour of three men, and say half a man to represent the extra hay and harvest hands etc. In addition to this produce for sale, the three men and myself have had a fair amount of food. All get milk. I get poultry, eggs, etc. Labour has been used for services in connection with the house. This cannot be actually deducted because it represents time when men would not of necessity be otherwise usefully employed, but still it helps me to live. Three men and a half produce all this food etc. from 120 acres. Where in the world can this be equalled? My farm is only what three quarters of our farms could be.

Is it not worth while to put our agriculture on such a footing that the best of our men are attracted to be farmers and farm-workers? As things are, the best recruits for both callings are economically forced from the life they love to other walks of life and the best land in the world has an over-share of the second-best and amateurs. May I repeat again the moral of my bricklayer labourer. Among the unemployed are a lot of men like him, who, although now in other industries, were brought up sufficiently in contact with the land. They are available agricultural workers right off without special training. Make conditions favourable and these can immediately be put on to the land. Often these men have children, only a few years off working age; these would grow up land-workers, small-holders, etc.

THE New Minister. Reading through what I have written, I seem to be conscious of a slight touch of ferocity, but I will not tone it down because it only states little-appreciated truth. We must not blame 'big business' for not being philanthropic, but if we have a state of 'nature in the raw' between big business distributors and the farmer-producers, the former, with their hundreds of thousands of pounds spent on advertising, make their impression, so the general public get a one-sided view which is a positive weakening of their own position as consumers. Public opinion is very powerful. If we could only get it well-informed, things would be very

much better for the producers and consumers but not, perhaps, for the semi-monoply distributing trades. 'Town and country must sink or swim together.' So said Major Elliot during the unemployment debate. That great truth as a foundation led to a speech which gave us a glimpse of a real agricultural policy.

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The Monologues of Mrs. Culver

by Eleanor Boniface

WHEN Mrs. Culver was 'queen' of the hopping she collected women to serve in the hop-fields. Early in October she would shepherd them home again, having been responsible for their work and behaviour. Though rather crippled, she enjoys life, and has a forehead like Beethoven's! While watching her bending over a small gramophone, I was struck by the likeness. 'Yaas,' she said, looking at the gramophone 'this is a bit o' lighten our darkness, and no mistake! But oh, 'tis Bands that is my ad-miration, Bands! Bands marching by here, marching! and shining! and they trumpets blaasting out "tra ra" and the drum agwine "rap, raap, row, row." Oh! it does seem to lift ye up like. That's where I misses the hopping. There was the Salvation Army, and we often did a turn to their waltz tunes, and every night we had the concertinas; they used to make 'em just rip out, they did. My old man was a wonder on the penny whistle, oh! a gurt per-former. Of course 'twas in the hopes of music that I was over-persuaded to goo to that garn party at the rectory. Only a tinny, lil harmonicum. Oh I did feel re-jected, and the rector's lady she played it, but she seemed somehows skeered of the instrument, and went tip-tapping at it like a hen on a bucket. The tea was a kind thing to do. Enjoy ourselves? Oh, we bored about! The rector and his lady meant well, but he's an old blunderbuss! I expects 'twas the want of the music that made it

dull. Now when we used to goo hopping, such a lil thing would please us and set us all hollering and singing and laughing! I always seemed to get an ad-mirer too! There was old Benny Parrett, he was a reglar beau of mine for the dancing. He's old now and wore out, he's got lopadated in his dress, but I won't have him laughed at, no! There was Olive, my grand-daughter, a giggling at him only last week, so "Olive!" I says, "adone now! adone-do!" That gal, she queers me! She comes here with her dog, and he un-rolled a hedgehog out o' the bank, so I hits the hedgehog on the nose with my stick. You've only to tap 'em just enough to draw a bubble of blood, and they dies quick. Olive she pouches her face at me and she says: "Oh Gran! you're crool, you've killed the hedgehog," and busts out a'crying! I says, "Yaas, I've killed a hedgehog, and not the first time my lady!" Why! we used to kill and cook 'em at the hopping, and roll 'em up in greasy brown paper and bake 'em, and they'd come out of their spikes as tender as a chicken, a'most. Pinch a few taters from the farmer, and there! you'd have a banquet. We used to get turnips too and one night some of the young lads they pinched a gurt turnip, hollowed it out, and set it on a stick with a lighted dip inside it, and then come wavering along in the di-rection of my dwelling. "Let's skeer ole Mother Culver," they says. I hears 'un, so I waits till they comes up close and then I pops out and I empt' a pail of soapy water over 'em, empt' it clean I did, and barks like a dog at 'em and they did just re-tire in a hurry! . . . Waal, my old man, he's gone now, and I expects he's enjoying the music. I feels happy about him, for up to the last he would always say his prayer, "God bless me an' make me a good boy for Christ's sake, Amen." And when I says to him, "Oh, don't say that, and you over seventy!" he says, "'Tis a simple prayer, and Harriet, my gal, you can't be too simple when you're afore the Throne of Grace." And I thinks, "You poor poverty-struck creature you! and yet so nice, so nice in your thoughts."'

My Country Crock Shop

ABOUT two and a half years ago, as a hobby and as a relief from a much more detailed business, and also because I felt there was a need for a china and glass shop in the little market town and its surrounding district, I decided to purchase a cottage which was for sale for £350. The next step was to make the shop attractive. I wished it to have a character which would appeal to people of discrimination. The local builder made two slightly bow windows with small panes. I felt that a moulded plaster plaque over the door would draw the front together, and had one modelled in London from the Italian at a cost of £12. The completed shop front cost £150. It has drawn many clients and proved a good silent salesman. For the name-plate I went to a guild of craftsmen in lettering who produced a pleasing sign in iron. I had the floor covered with small oak blocks. The initial cost was rather high, but the effect was excellent. In displaying the wares I have cut out the expense of fixed shelves and use tables and dressers which can be moved about. One of the blunders I made was to purchase a very demonstrative cash register. But I got it changed. I well remember my first buying expedition to the potters' London wholesale showrooms around Holborn Circus and Hatton Garden. My first three calls daunted me. I explained that the business was quite new to me, and that I should like to look round the displays to see if there were any things of interest to me. The stereotyped sales-people informed me that they thought some other potters' ware would suit me better. I was passing down Hatton Garden feeling rather fed up with these ungracious manners, when I spotted the name-plate of a renowned firm of potters. I ventured in to a feast of design and colour. In an apologetic frame of mind, I offered a modest order of about £3. Consideration was given to the question whether such a small order could be taken, but business was eventually done, and I have since had much satisfaction in

my relations with the firm. Another house which made my buying pleasant and easy, dealt in china, pottery and glass, chiefly of French origin. I was allowed to wander about and choose items, chiefly utility, which I thought pleasing and saleable. I was not forced to buy in dozens, but just the number I wanted, so that I made up a very varied cask. I have continued to do business with these people. I am always glad I started buying in this way rather than by giving one or two firms a free hand to supply their general stock lines and patterns, usually stocked by the general china shops. One has to try to create a favourable impression on wholesalers, and use tact, if the best is to be got out of them. The buyer must have his own firm ideas about form and colour, but errors of judgment are easy to make. After two years I find I have grown more sensitive to beauty.

The business of retailing china, pottery and glass carries what at first appears to be a large profit, an average of forty per cent, but the slow turnover, breakages and high transport charges have to be taken into account. My average turnover since starting this small business has been £21 per week. It takes three years to turn the corner: after that, if the business is kept at concert pitch, it is congenial and lucrative. I can easily make a net profit, after all expenses, of £200, which, for a small business involving about £750 capital, is, I think, very good. It is still advancing. Providing stock is well chosen, that is, has good line and colour, it does not depreciate in value; for myself I always aim at selecting goods with a simple line, and steer clear of anything grotesque. Clients often ask what a particular piece of pottery or glass is used for: when suggestions are offered, a sale is usually made. Prospective customers enjoy being allowed to wander round a china shop. To attempt to press a sale is poor salesmanship, but to be ever ready to pour oneself out to give any information when required, is the soul of the business. Goodwill is far more important than sales; profit comes if the broad view in business is taken. – *C. S.*

Great-Grandmother goes to Dorset—3

THIS is the final instalment of a 'Journal', written 137 years ago, by a lady who, happily for the readers of THE COUNTRYMAN, *deemed travelling from the Isle of Wight to Dorset an adventure worthy of the most careful record.*

WEDNESDAY, we were entertained with a concert of music and an excellent syllabub, etc.

Thursday, the morning was devoted to melancholy duties, as we visited Netherbury churchyard and the family tomb, which is a truly superb one.

Next day we were very profitably employed in getting up some Muslins previous to our visit to Bridport. On re-perusing the latter part of this Journal I find two capital omissions. First, in not having noticed the Workhouse. This House of Industry (as it may properly be termed) owes its institution to Mr. Robert Conway, who may justly be hailed Patron of the Village Poor. To a mind benevolent like his it must afford peculiar gratification that they will bless the hour which first brought them to his notice. It is a very neat building and the master and mistress of it appear to be worthy people. A Sunday School, at no great distance, likewise claims the attention of Mrs. Conway and her daughters, who, in conjunction with other ladies, attend every week to hear the children read, etc., and to bestow rewards on such as excel by presenting them with some of Mrs. H. More's publications. That Lady and her Sister are intimately acquainted with Mrs. Conway's family, and are ever ready to offer their assistance towards Piety and Virtue. Their pen must inspire the Mind with Emulation and sentiments of gratitude. After supper the Ladies sang several songs which, as they breathed sentiments friendly to Liberty and Peace, were much approved of.

Saturday morning I devoted to Epistolary Correspondence, and addressed a Letter full of complaint to the Isle of Wight,

as it had proved some interruption to the pleasure we enjoy'd among our respected friends, not having received intelligence from that quarter. A letter arrived from my beloved Sister which had been written nine days. From this circumstance I may derive improvement, in the first place not to be over-anxious respecting anything, neither to be Censorious. The tender interest which I am convinced our dear friends take in whatever affects our happiness should remove every Suspicion of neglect. Yet how prone we are to indulge Fear, when the affections are interested. Philosophy, however, teacheth Patience, and Patience produceth Comfort.

This evening the two Revd. Gentlemen accompanied us in a walk thro' the Church Yard, and, by reading the different inscriptions, improved the time by serious reflections on the Transitory nature of all earthly enjoyments.

On returning to Mrs. Arnold's, the two Revds. departed no doubt to contemplate the solemnities of the approaching Day.

Sunday Morning, Mr. Fawcett preached an excellent sermon on the beauties of Nature as display'd in the Creation, and Mr. Howe in the afternoon gave us a personal Discourse. The inferences drawn were such as led to the contemplation of Death and the expectation of happiness which it held out to those who are diligently preparing for it. His address to young Persons at the close of it was also very solemn and impressive.

The next day two Gentlemen politely escorted us on the Pillion to Chantmarle. I had not gone far before my arm aching excessively, dear Aunt proposed our changing horses, and we rode up to a thatched abode in hope of procuring assistance. A good woman was standing with a child in her arms. With a low Curtesy she offered assistance, and we had prepared for our exchange of horses when the difficulty arose how we were to remount. It was a nursing chair that she had brought out, and almost the only one her house afforded, as on entering it we could only see a broken table

and a coffin stool. The latter discovery I was thankful for, as by that means we were soon reseated. I could not avoid reflecting, on seeing this state of real poverty, how much of apparent content was interwoven with it. A Cheerful Smile animated this poor woman's countenance. She seemed delighted in having afforded us assistance, and, on dropping my little mite into her hand, most gratefully returned her acknowledgements. On arriving at Chantmarle House, we were welcomed with kindness by our worthy friends, and soon retired to our spacious Apartments.

The next morning, just as the two Revd. Gents. were setting off, a shower of rain obliged them to seek shelter in the Chapel. The horses, as if conscious of the sacreligious Affront, refused to ascend the steps, and it required no inconsiderable exertion of the whip to oblige them.

The past week nothing very material occurred. Friday we employ'd ourselves in Ironing. The Evening was of the description when 'not a Zephyr fan'd the Breeze or murmur wak'd the Rill'. It was the moment for poetic fancy and, had I possessed an able pen, the Glow of enthusiasm would have inspired it. My amiable friend Mrs. P., I should have represented in the character of plucking the full blown Rose. The Milkmaid singing her evening ditty, the Infant feebly crying itself to sleep in the adjacent cottage, such was the unusual Serenity of all we saw and heard, and so fragrant the perfume of the hay and flowers that it inspired the most ecstatic and grateful feelings to the Creator! whose Wisdom, Goodness, Power 'sprang in each blade and bloomed in every flower'.

I received yesterday a letter from our worthy friend and minister Mr. Watts. With lively humour he represents the intricacy of the road to Chantmarle House or 'The Postman's Stupidity', and expresses pleasure at hearing that we are situated in so Agreeable a Circle. In a pleasing manner he represents the comfort arising from improving society. 'It is that,' he adds, 'which can only render life a blessing or

even desirable. Without it we are a sort of Exile in a strange Country, but with it in a Desert we may find reason for satisfaction and joy.' It is society which awakes the mind to reflection and invigorates benevolent feelings of the soul, which raises it to a proper state of Sympathy and Intelligence and fits it for intercourse with Beings who move in a sphere of uninterrupted happiness and joy. Society, then, being thus capable of ennobling our natures, what pity is it that it should be abused or that Intelligent Beings should associate together without aiming at each others' improvement?

I received by the same post a letter from my Uncle who mentions that there have been considerable alarms in the neighbourhood. A mob had arisen threatening to destroy the Bake houses, etc., and attempted setting others on fire, but much to the credit of several Gentlemen in Ringwood, etc., they had formed themselves into a Committee and subscribed large sums for the relief of the poor who were enabled to purchase bread and meat at a reduced price. Mr. Petty has adopted a similar mode and Mr. Conway with great assiduity joins him, and it is a pleasing sight to find them engaged in thus adding to the comfort of their fellow creatures; and if the prayer of humble merit can avail, no doubt these good men will be rewarded for it.

Saturday Mrs. P. and myself went to Beaminster on Horseback. Unfortunately the rain came on and obliged us to travel with full speed over the Downs, and notwithstanding our best endeavours, we experienced considerable inconvenience. We were afterwards more than susceptible of cold. On our alighting at Beaminster, Prudence would have recommended some warm Negus and an Hour's rest, but my intention was to hear Mr. Tapperd preach and I experienced Shiverings of heat and cold. The next day I was unwell. In the afternoon it was proposed for our return to Beaminster. I should have very much enjoy'd the visit had not my head ached violently. Indeed, I was so ill that society at that moment, however agreeable, was truly irksome. Our kind

friends, ever studious to oblige, requested my taking a turn in Mr. Cox's garden and, supposing the air might be serviceable, I yielded to their entreaties, but the variety of pleasing objects had lost their charm. The romantic Shrubbery, beautiful Cascade and murmuring Grotto were insipid!

Mr. C. is an immensely rich old Batchelor the people say. He is too fond of Money but, as I always select the brightest trait in a character, I cannot avoid reciting the following instance of his Humanity. He has in his Plantations a very beautiful aviary of Birds, which is form'd on that construction as to admit the free circulation of air, and several fine trees and shrubs are placed so as to allow of their freedom in flying from one to the other, and quite sheltered from the weather. Whenever the old Gent. observes a boy robbing a bird's nest, he makes a purchase of it, and introduces it into this place of safety where they apparently enjoy themselves as well as in the open air, and we see Canaries, Larks and Goldfinches living sociably together. There are a great variety of foreign birds likewise, and while the eye is attracted by the elegant plumage of the Indian Pheasant, the ear is charmed with the melodious Warblings of the Linnet and the Thrush.

Mrs. Ashburton, of East House, Sydling St. Nicholas, Dorchester, writes: 'A fortnight ago I had a visit from 150 *members of the Dorset Archaeological Society "to see the excellent specimen of a small eighteenth-century house entirely unspoilt by time and the restorer". This is the house at which the "great-grandmother" took tea. She describes it as "a pretty modern house"! It was built in* 1787. *Chantmarle is five miles from here. It is now owned by Mr. C. St. John Hornby (Also a subscriber to* THE COUNTRYMAN).'

Ø

BADGER AND WEASEL.—At four in the morning I have seen a badger, followed by three shaggy young ones, all looking like animated door mats. – *V.U.*

Rural Authors—24. *T. F. Powys*

SOME years ago, I chanced upon a copy of 'Mr. Tasker's Gods', a novel by a writer new to me. On its wrapper there was a picture of pigs. The pigs were Mr. Tasker's gods. The book seemed to me astounding. The prose was magnificent: limpid, Biblical, dramatic – but the outlook of the writer impressed me as dark, distorted and cruel. Reading left an open wound, only slightly healed by what was then a courageous perusal of his other work. I found my experience to be general. 'Tasker' does have that effect, a distinguished writer told me. 'When I finished it, I was moved to write an impassioned letter to the author denouncing what I thought was his astigmatism. But remember, "Tasker" is an early work. It is scarcely more than a signpost. There are at least three Powys manners, and "Tasker" represents none of them in ripeness.' Reading Powys as a whole, the remark will be found true. Though he works on the smallest canvas imaginable, the three manners emerge distinct. The first is allegorical. The surest Powys novel in this manner is 'Mr. Weston's Good Wine', the most popular, as it is certainly the finest, of all his work, with an outlook which, if sombre and on occasion tragic, is mellow, serene, and individual. One to-day hesitates to use the word 'great', but I can think of few novels of the present century likely to outlive 'Mr. Weston'. It is a peak, and a high one. The second manner is humorous. As a comic writer Powys has a curious and unexpected Latinity. His ripest work in this manner is 'Kindness in a Corner', a book which, as a kindly satire on the ways of country clergymen, is utterly delicious. Gone are the passions and grossnesses of the grimmer novels. Instead, sunshine and laughter give the reader a Powys utterly new. The third manner is an individual blend of mysticism and reflection. Its perfection is in that strange testament (Powys's first published work) 'Soliloquies of a Hermit'. It is a book which it is necessary to understand if you would know the man

fully, but do not ask for a ready-made, tabulated philosophy, for you will be disappointed. His new book, 'The Two Thieves' (Chatto and Windus, 7s. 6d. net), consists of three long-short stories which are difficult to classify at all, though the title-story is certainly allegorical, and the second story 'God' has a dénouement of fantastic humour: it contains what is technically some of his best writing.

T. F. Powys comes from a literary family, most of whom write and write well. He has lived for many years in an obscure Dorset village which shelters from the sea behind high downs, and has lain undisturbed for centuries. People say it is bewitched. In reaching it one has to cross a deep stream which divides a narrow country lane. On one side of the stream is the larger world, on the other – or so a visitor may feel – is the fantastic world of the Powys books. The greatest, commonest, and most natural mistake which Powys's readers make is to regard him as a 'realist'. He is not. He creates a society of his own which does not in any way exactly represent country life as it is lived to-day. If you accept the cosmos he builds up, and surrender yourself to it, you will appreciate Powys. If you try to regard him as a photographer, you will be forced to the conclusion that his vision is distorted and that he is a poor selective craftsman. If you want an apt and helpful comparison in another art, think of the masterly cartoons of Breughel. Life, for Powys, has not been easy. He has lived much alone, but not in cities. He has worked with his hands. He has never been affluent, or anything approaching it, and he has only recently, in middle life, derived material benefit from his writing. His experience has been narrow, but intense. 'I like monotony', he once said, and in those three words declared himself to be of a differing generation from those whose passion is for speed, or at least movement. He is a traditional writer in the best sense. He has tried to convey general truths from concrete symbols, and it is these which have been taken, too often, for actuality. – *O. W.*

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A Curious Rural Sect

by Earl Winterton, M.P.

IN a corner of the Weald of Sussex, due north of Petworth, lies a quiet woodland district the inhabitants of which do their farm work in summer and copse-cutting in winter, untroubled from year's end to year's end, by railways or the big military camps and red brick villas not so many miles away over the Surrey border. It is in this district, which may be said, roughly speaking, to comprise the parishes of Wisborough, Northchapel, Kirdford and Lurgashall, that a little-known sect has its headquarters. In 1850, a London shoemaker, John Sirgood, came to live at Loxwood, a small village in Wisborough, and started the Society of Dependents or Cokelers. By 1861 a considerable proportion of the farmers and labourers in the district had joined, and this seems to have alarmed the parish authorities for a notice was served on Sirgood and his followers informing them that unless they discontinued their unlawful meetings they would be prosecuted according to law. The notice was accompanied by the following letter signed by a gentleman who was deputed by the vicar and churchwardens:

> Mr. Sirgood—Sir, I went to your house on Thursday evening for the purpose of giving you the enclosed notice, but found you holding one of your unlawful meetings. I am glad I did this because I have now myself witnessed two of these unlawful assemblies there, and could without difficulty procure your conviction in two penalties and these two could probably be easily multiplied. It is a very general opinion that your illegal proceedings have been allowed to go far enough, and that it is quite time they should be controlled.

No action was taken, however, by the parish authorities, and soon afterwards the repeal of the Conventicle Act left the sect free. Meanwhile, Sirgood was establishing branches of the sect in the neighbouring villages and in more distant places. Early in the 'sixties a chapel and burial-ground were acquired. In several of these places, notably at Warnham, Loxwood and Northchapel, a sort of store was built so that



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the flock should be commercially self-sufficient. When in 1885 Sirgood died he must have had nearly 2,000 people under his influence. The reading and committal to memory of large portions of scripture form a considerable part of the Cokelers' services, and members speak as the Spirit moves them. They differ from almost every other Christian sect in that they do not use the Lord's Prayer, asserting that it was given merely as a model for other prayers and that its brevity proves its inadaptability for use. Of an evening, in a quiet Sussex lane, one may suddenly come upon twenty or thirty Cokelers driving in wagons to their chapel, and chanting a sort of psalm, the men being dressed in dark clothes and the women in black dresses with poke bonnets. Total abstinence is no longer, as formerly, insisted on among the Cokelers, but it is encouraged. The sect, while recognizing the necessity of marriage, does not encourage that estate. It also eschews dancing, music, except of a religious nature, and flowers. A more honest, industrious and clean-living set of people it would be hard to find. The vicars of parishes which contain Cokelers are almost unanimous in their praise. But I should not think that the Cokelers now number more than 900 all told. Besides their chapels, the Cokelers have stores at Norwood, Warnham, Shamley Green, Loxwood and Northchapel. At Northchapel, a small village six miles from a railway station, with a parish population of 700, the Cokeler store consists of three departments and employs thirteen saleswomen and assistants, besides delivery-cart drivers. The red-brick emporium with plate-glass windows is flanked on one side by the Cokeler meeting house and on the other by the sect's steam mill. At another store, at Loxwood, even bicycles, gramophones and motor accessories are dealt in; indeed a motor is let out for hire, and I believe one could buy a motor. The labouring class among the Cokelers is much better off than its neighbours. The members practise mutual assistance not only in commerce but in agriculture.

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The Country House Aeroplane – 16

Forced Landings, by Lord Willoughby de Broke

FORCED Landings. Almost the first question one is asked by one's non-flying friends is 'What happens if your engine stops?' and 'Isn't it dreadfully dangerous?' or 'Surely you must drop like a stone?' Forced landings, as they are technically known, are generally caused by engine failure or bad visibility. Engine failure may be due to several causes, such as fracture of a part of the engine or failure of the ignition, petrol or lubrication systems. These possible causes can be reduced to a negligible minimum by strictly adhering to the maker's instructions regarding care and maintenance, and by seeing that one starts a flight with a supply of petrol which allows an ample margin. Such is the reliability of the modern light aeroplane engine that many post-War pilots, who have flown several hundreds of hours, have never once had a forced landing from engine failure. Furthermore, such care and maintenance, as is asked for by most engine makers, involves only about two hours' work after each twenty-five hours in the air. It can easily be done by any owner-pilot, or at an aerodrome by a ground-engineer for a few shillings: so there is really no excuse for neglecting this very important procedure. But let us suppose that the worst has happened and the engine has stopped and we have to land. A modern light aeroplane with its engine stopped is capable of gliding well over a mile for every thousand feet of altitude it has. Most cross-country flights are or should be carried out at a height of about 2000 feet, so the pilot can pick out his landing place anywhere in a circle of a radius of two miles. This is a considerable area and one would be very unlucky, if, on any average journey, one failed to find a place where the machine could be put down in safety. Even if one was unlucky and had to land in a small field, or one with an unsuitable surface, one might run the risk of doing some small damage to the aeroplane, such as breaking



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a propeller, a wing tip, or a wheel. The risk to the occupants would be negligible. If one has to cross a stretch of difficult country, it is easy to increase one's altitude so as to give one a gliding range of four or five miles in any direction. The best way of avoiding forced landings due to bad visibility is to follow the good old motto which was recommended to me by one of our foremost instructors, 'No see, no fly!' It is always quite possible however, that visibility may be good at the commencement of a flight and deteriorate later. Occasionally, therefore, the pilot has to land. In this case he still has the use of his engine and can throttle back and cruise slowly round until he can find a suitable field. That is a field which he can not only get into but get out of when the weather clears. Any competent pilot should be able to land in these conditions with perfect safety to machine and occupants. Furthermore the risk may be largely avoided by consulting the excellent weather reports that are brought up to date at different hours of the day at most aerodromes in this country and abroad for any route. Finally, the bringing off of a successful forced landing depends largely on the skill of the pilot. He is well coached in this art during his period of instruction and is strongly advised to keep on practising it afterwards, as often as he possibly can. Many pilots do this, but one does hear that others are too inclined to trust to the amazing reliability of their engines. This is a pity, not only from the point of view of the safety of their passengers, machine, and themselves, but from that of flying in general. When the public reads in the press, 'Another Air Crash' it does not always realize that there never need have been an accident at all if the pilot had taken a little more trouble to attend to the servicing of his machine and to develop his own skill at landing in small fields without using his engine.

HUMOURS of Aeroplaning. When Miss Earhart landed in Ireland after her crossing of the Atlantic her dry cleaners cabled their congratulations. 'Knew you'd make it', they said, 'we never lose a customer'. – *G.*

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The Year Round

THE following diary of the year in the Avon valley in the neighbourhood of Downton and Fordingbridge, on the edge of the New Forest, was written for the instruction of a party of visitors

December. Holly cutting and carting. Ploughing and harrowing on the purlieus. *January.* Carting wood and cleaning up after holly cutting. Field fires of squitch and hedge cuttings. *February.* Digging. Cleaning raspberry beds. Cutting 'fuzz tops' to chaff up for feed. *March.* Still busy in gardens and fields. A very early foal sometimes found. Cattle marked. Watercress gathering. *April.* Early foals arriving. Forest ponies marked. They come down the lanes for young grass and have to be driven back. Gorse in bloom. Seed sowing. Primroses and daffies in bloom. Flower marketing begins. *May.* Work among beehives. More cleaning and sowing. Tulips and other early flowers abundant. Mangold rowing and hoeing. *June.* Good grass; cows in full milk. Early hay cut and carried. Making spears for rick thatching. Eels caught. Bees swarming. Strawberry and merry (a Hampshire cherry) picking; bells rung and tins rattled from early dawn to scare birds from the fruit. *July.* Our busiest month. Late hay on the meads. Spear cutting in the water meadows for thatching. Many flower shows and gymkhanas. Long days picking, packing and marketing fruit. More root hoeing. Thatching hay ricks. *August.* Clearing up the month of weeds. Weed cutting in the river. Late sowings for spring use. Charabanc outings – Sunday Schools, Women's Institute, etc., etc. Harvest begins. *September.* Early fern cut green and carted. First apple picking begins; all ladders, barrels and sacks mobilized. Blackberrying. *October.* Main crop of fern cut and carried. Blackberries still. Cider presses at work. Potato digging begins. A good time for thatching roofs. *November.* Final tidy-up of hedges and roadsides. Late fern cutting. Pigs turned into Forest for pannage. Leaves



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raked and trodden into sacks for litter. Drowners start work on the meads. Fence mending and tool grinding. After a gale, children are in the forest filling their school satchels with sweet chestnuts. *Throughout the year.* Drowners open and shut the hatches in the water carriages and drawns; the gravel pit is worked and gravel carted; wood is gathered, manure carted; the mill cart passes delivering farm rations. The old eel-trap maker makes a trap of hazel rods when he gets an order. – *K.T.*

The Collector – 15. *Domestic Silver*

THERE is no safer investment than old silver. It is not the intrinsic value of the metal but the delicate contours that count. When silver teapots were first made they were small because tea was expensive. From the time of Anne we encounter a development of types, ever increasing in size as tea became cheaper. The earliest teapots of silver were bulbous and the lids were domed. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century the pear-shaped type came in and the lids became smaller. Finally, we come to the period when the influence of the Adam brothers began to be felt. This period, 1780-1800, marks the rise of the middle classes; hence the profusion of Sheffield plate, virtually imitation silver, manufactured at Sheffield and Soho, for home use and for export. With prices as they are now it is possible to find many bargains in old silver. Not always at country sales, but lurking on the shelves of old-fashioned jewellers' shops in country towns, or in the show cases of pawnbrokers. Bargains abound even in the high class shops of London. Gone are the Americans, the chief snappers-up. The collector must not expect to purchase the earliest silver ware except at a price. It is among the products of the third George that he will be best served. The severe lines of Adam character are the most satisfying. And so from teapots at £7 to £10 you can descend to spout cups and jugs


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which are something like teapots. Sugar bowls, which developed from the earlier porringers, are very expensive. The favourite design and one of the most satisfying for silver milk and cream jugs, was the pitcher. You may find pitchers of urn shape, and others that are flat bottomed, at from £3 to £5. Antique silver is, all things considered, inexpensive; the price paid can be regained at any time, and there is always the chance of a rise in value. But the collector puts utility and beauty before all thought of profit. He searches for things that in a true sense are never old-fashioned. Antique silver, therefore, represents the height of the collector's ambition. Even as late as the 'fifties of the nineteenth century 'the urn' was a feature of the tea table. There are plenty of Sheffield plate examples. Some are of barrel design, others are globular, yet others are of that fascinating vase form which has never been equalled. The vase was considered to be a mark of gentility. Silver coffee pots of the eighteenth century are more difficult to obtain. The smaller are the more expensive. Those dating from the reign of Anne fetch as much as £150, even the bucolic designs of 1825 realize as much as £45. A Sheffield plate coffee pot costs from £4 to £5. Some of the finest of the small silver types are those still in use at Brooks's. Mustard pots of varying date are costly; £15 for an Adam design is cheap. Salt cellars at £9 per pair, pepper pots at £18 each are counted reasonable. But the small collector need not despair; there are sugar tongs from 10*s.* to £3, sets of half-dozens of tea spoons from 18*s.*, table spoons, soup ladles and forks. When one wishes to make a present either to oneself or to one's friends there is nothing so attractive as old silver. And when one speaks of old silver one's thoughts run on the old silver not only of England but of every country of Western Europe from Sweden to Spain.

'THE feature to which I always turn first', writes W. B., 'is The Collector'. On reading the article on Coaching Prints, I recollected seeing the 'Highgate Tunnel' and another in a junk shop.

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THAT RADIATE FRIENDLINESS

If you would send a gift that would radiate friendliness in a home you know, let it be a gift of these beautiful candles To bring colour and gaiety to the Christmas table—to shine on happy faces—to kindle old memories in their kindly glow No name on your list but would be gratified by a gift so appropriate as Nell Gwynn candles.

Nell Gwynn candles are made in 36 different colours and 10 sizes They are solid dyed—not merely surface tinted—and they burn steadily without smoke or odour

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Nell Gwynn "Antique" Candles are the masterpieces of the candle-maker's craft They form a beautiful and useful gift at little more than the price of a Christmas card *Two 8 inch Candles in Attractive Box—1/- Per Box* Also obtainable in the new Gift Boxes, containing Two 8-inch Candles and Two Candlesticks to match—2/6 Per Box

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J.C & J FIELD LTD., *EST 1642 IN THE REIGN OF CHARLES I* LONDON S.E.1

I managed to secure them, one being slightly marked by mould, and am now assured that the pair is worth at least 50 guineas.' – *B.*

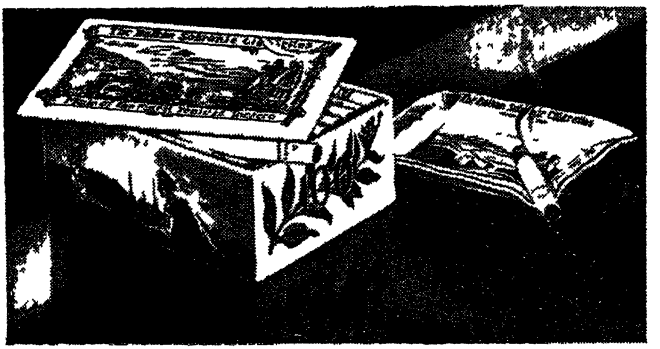
'I HEAR of your interesting and alive "Collector",' writes another subscriber, 'rushing into a garden full of unknown ladies, waving a pair of Georgian spittoons and shouting, "Look what I have found!" I like that man.'

THEY are fortunate who can secure a copy of the magnificently illustrated, privately printed *Old English Clocks*, by F. H. Green (St. Dominics Press), for the text is most agreeably written and every illustration is sheer beauty. No wonder Tompion and Graham came to be buried in Westminster Abbey. Among the King's clocks, which were photographed for the first time for this volume, is one, in going order, bearing the initials of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn within true lovers' knots. Queen Victoria bought it for £110. – The sevenpenny *Furniture Beetles: Their Life-History and How to Check or Prevent the Damage Caused by the Worm*, a British Museum (Natural History) brochure (British Museum, Cromwell Road, S.W.7), should be read before the spring, when the attack on the enemy is to be delivered.

Tail Corn

THE new Minister of Agriculture's grandfather, another Walter Elliot, who farmed, among other holdings, the land which Major Walter Elliot now owns, was an experimenter and innovator, and introduced Oxford Downs into Scotland. His five brothers were noted farmers also. It was said of the Minister's great-grandfather, yet another Walter Elliot, that he had caused a barren valley to blossom. The Minister also comes of farming stock on his mother's side. He is laird of Harwood, Roxburghshire, and has about a thousand acres in hand. The 'Times' called him a Lanarkshire man but an indignant correspondent of ours would have our contemporary know that he is 'a typical Borderer and not a western Whig'.

THE stark detail of the immemorial Cerne Giant, cut in the face of the hill at Cerne Abbas, lately offended some male visitors, who proceeded to Grundify it with grass sods. After they had gone it was two women who removed the sods.



SOON will be the time when all must eat as never have they eaten before. When, for one whole day, nothing is forbidden but all allowed. Afterwards the reckoning and the thanking. How comforting to think this arduous task will be the easier if he or she has sent him or her Balkan Sobranie. For then the present is truly welcome and the thanks sincerely meant

Balkan Sobranie

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Medium 3s 8d, Large 4s per 25 (pocket tin)
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Wild Life and Tame

DISAPPEARING Hornets. One day in the summer my gardener brought to me in the palm of his hand a Greater Horntail (Sirex Gigas) which he had found on a larch-pole. 'One of them says it's a hornet', he said, 'pointing over his shoulder to two other men working near, 'but 'tisn't a hornet, is it?' Even if it had been, apparently, he would not have hesitated to bring it me in his fingers. The big, black and yellow insect is often mistaken by countryfolk for a hornet. But as a fact, are not hornets very rarely seen to-day? Are they not becoming more uncommon every year? It would be logical to suppose that this must be so, since they rest in hollow trees, which are cut down, and in old barns which with up-to-date farming become fewer and fewer. Besides, a hornet's nest when it is once found is pretty sure to be destroyed. For myself, I cannot remember having seen a hornet in England for more than twenty years, and I imagine that as the countryside is more and more built over, they gradually disappear. – *P. Q.*

IN a Burmese Jungle. In the trackless and boundless woodlands of Burma no one knows quite what may lurk. I might mention the rare golden cat (Felis temminicki), a cat 51 inches long, which even a tiger will avoid. Or there is Sondaicus, the 'extinct' rhino. If you shot one in the highlands of Upper Burma you would go to jail for six months. A specimen was shot near Taiping (in British Malaya) in 1923, by a planter who had his two hundred guinea gun and his trophy confiscated. I had a rather remarkable experience with a jungle rat when I was in camp and it was my custom to have a cold supper late at night. At this particular rat I had already thrown sundry books and boots. Having developed the utmost contempt for my powers of attack, it came one night and disputed a slice of bread with me on my plate. One of my favourite walks has had to be abandoned on account of a bear with two cubs. Last rains a Malayan



Who's been at my Eno?

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bear measuring 7 foot 8 inches was bagged within a few miles of my house. The chief trouble arises from elephants. One elephant met a motor bus on the main road and the bus driver unwisely hooted at him. The elephant instantly charged, pierced the radiator with his tusk, and contemptuously kicked the bus down a small cliff. Elephants don't always have it all their own way. Last winter one attacked a car from behind, catching hold of the red-hot exhaust with his trunk. The beast fled screaming. Our motor road is most of it through magnificent jungles. One night in the glare of my headlights I came upon a procession of porcupines. A curious thing is that we have very few snakes on my estate. This immunity is due to a bunch of hamadryads. Hamadryads feed on other snakes. One of ours here, which we killed in the Circuit House last year (two days before Lord Irwin breakfasted in the building) was about eight feet long. In Pakokku I have seen them fourteen feet long with a hood like a soup-plate. – *Theophilus*

THE Rats' Larder. Two farmers in this county complain, the one of losing a bushel of special walnuts, and the other 60 chicks out of 200, all by rats. In each instance the booty was found below boarding. – *Gloucestershire*

'*TUCKER*'. We called the cow by this name because it was the name of the man who sold her to us. Four years ago we brought her home in the dickey of the car, a three-weeks-old. A cross-bred Jersey-shorthorn, she is. She gave us two calves and lots of exceptionally rich milk. We sold her because she was the only non-pedigree cow in our tiny herd and because she was too clever at opening gates. I sold her to the neighbour who lived three miles away. She went to her new home two weeks before she was due to calve. One day at 6 a.m. there was a gentle moo beneath our bedroom window. Then I heard a gate click to. Tucker had let herself into the home field, and the gate had closed behind her. She walked down to the calving shed about 11 a.m., and dropped a fine bull calf.– *H. W.*

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From Rural Scotland and Rural Wales

Widening our Horizons. Take that phrase, now, Revival of Rural Life. Doesn't it explain much that is lacking in our approach to rural social problems? Reviving rural life means attempting to restore something that has passed away, and that is typical of nearly all our thinking about the country – a sentimental melancholy because things will not remain as we imagine they used to be, and seldom were. We cannot revive, however much we may wish to do so; we have to recreate if we mean to preserve what is valuable in rural life. In Scotland where we had no villages, the unit was the parish, and it was a real social unit. There were the parish schools, many of them dating back to John Knox. There were the Parish Kirks, and even when the Disruption came, the Free Kirks duplicated the Parish Kirks. When the School Boards arrived, they were Parish Boards, and later we had Parish Councils. The Councils and Boards have gone; the Kirks and schools remain, but the parish is no longer a social unit. In spite of the attenuated population and the motor bus and wireless, we still think in terms of the parish and cling passionately to a sociological unit that has no longer any reality. The school is a good example of an outgrown mould into which we attempt to force the life of to-day. We are sentimental about the parish school and we talk about the tradition of the parish school, but we forget the conditions under which the school served the old community. It had a larger population to serve, and it was satisfied to push on the 'lad o' pairts' and did that well, but we did not keep all the children at school until they were fourteen. Nowadays the lad and the lass o' pairts pass on to the secondary school and the others are for the most part left to mark time in the later years of compulsory attendance because the small parish schools with one, two, or, in favoured circumstances, three teachers are not provided with the equipment and cannot specialize sufficiently to provide the variety of

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teaching necessary for the older pupils. If we would frankly discard the parishes and develop on wider areas, we could develop new rural schools which would give those pupils who are not setting out for an academic career an education which would have rural life as its outlook, a rural life that was wider than the parish. And what is true of school life is equally true of the cultural activities of adult life. We must widen our horizons if we are to meet modern needs. – *J.F.D.*



THE NEW MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (left)
Deliberating on a non-agricultural problem

IN Welsh Glens. Can Scotland beat this? An old Welsh farmer, noted for nearness, had a journey to make across the moor. He took his boots, a new pair, off, slung them round his neck, and walked bare-footed. In the course of the journey he stubbed his toe against a stone, cutting it



You cannot *afford* to be ill this winter

Illness now is more than an expense—it is a serious handicap at a time when every man must be at his best. That is why it is sound economy to start a course of SCOTT'S Emulsion straight away. Banish coughs, colds and more serious illnesses from your home. Remember always that substitutes are false economy. For health's sake ask for genuine SCOTT'S Emulsion



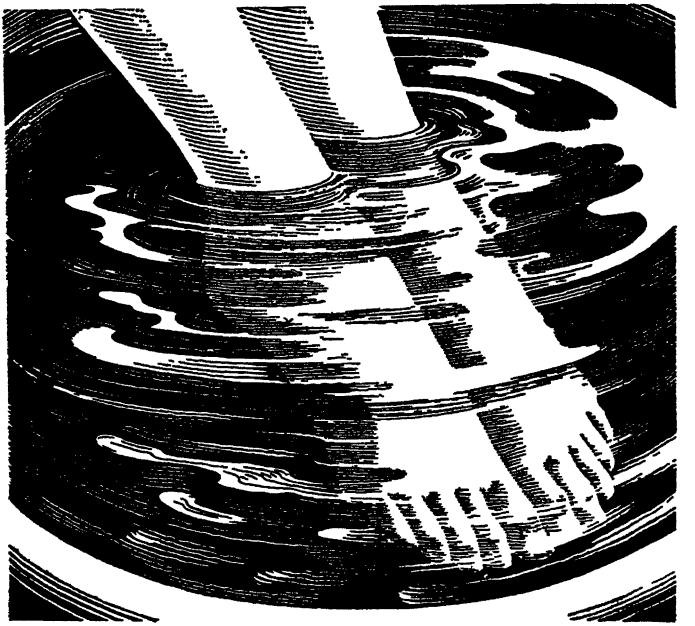
SCOTT'S EMULSION

badly. All he said was, 'Thank God I hadn't got my boots on'. Although electricity is finding its way into the glens, the rushlight is still made and used, particularly in the uplands of Merioneth, Denbigh, and Cardigan. Peat is being burnt and corn is threshed with a flail in some upland farms to-day. On the farms on the wild border of Radnorshire and Cardigan life is still rough – houses may be snow-bound for days, but the people manage very well. They have the wireless to-day, but I remember a house where, twenty years ago, there were a harmonium, a 'cello, a fiddle, and a cornet, each instrument played by some member of the family or by one of the servants. There was a time when nearly all farm servants were performers, more or less accomplished, upon the accordion and the jew's harp, and domestic choirs– 'cor yr aelwyd', the hearth choir – were a matter of course. – *E. M. H.*

MIOGOD. In many parts of Wales families still stay at home on New Year's Eve to bake 'miogod', a species of shortbread, the baking of which starts late on in the night and continues well into the New Year. When midnight has struck, young and old, men and women, go from house to house with the greeting, 'Fy nghlenig i chwi'. For this greeting they are rewarded with some of the newly baked 'miogod'. Sometimes it is the custom to tie a parcel of the cakes on the latch of the door so that callers who arrive long after midnight shall not be disappointed. For failure to provide this reward the most popular form of revenge is the removal of gates, and it is no unusual sight on the first morning of the year to see a few stray gates about the countryside. – J.M.H.

Ø

SUPERIOR URBAN PHYSIQUE. – After living in this little rural town of 3000 inhabitants in the West of England for ten years, we are of the opinion that the children are in physique markedly below the children in a good south-east London district. – *F.*



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Two tired feet and a bowl of hot water with a Reckitt's Bath Cube in it. And then —what sweet relief! Weariness dissolving, tiredness melting away .. Gentle return of all that the long day has stolen—the energy and freedom of your stride.

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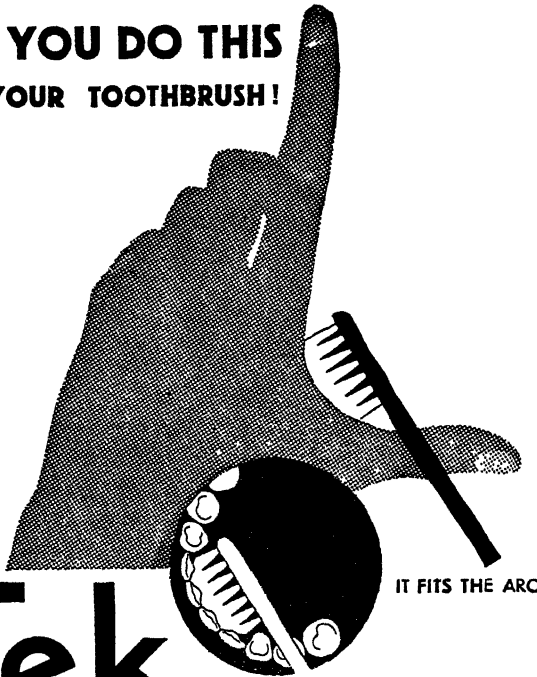
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Bench, Council and Committee

THE Guv'nor. The visiting justice must often feel that, though the men in gaol have been offenders, they are sometimes men not lacking in grit and sometimes wit. There was, for instance, the murderer who objected to the lugubriousness of the chaplain's farewell remarks. 'Look 'ere', he said, 'you be careful; in ten minutes I'll be seeing your Guv'nor!' Mr. Frank Gray once demonstrated to me that a tramp costs the community, from his youth until he is thirty, the amazing sum of £1,000 or something like it. In these circumstances every enlightened local administrator must felicitate Mr. Gray on the culmination of his efforts in the decision of the County Councils of Berks, Bucks and Oxon, and the Councils of Oxford City and Reading Borough to carry out the scheme which proposed to classify, into old and young, vagrant tramps seeking shelter in casual wards, and then to furnish separate and special treatment. It is pretty generally realized by now that the post-War period has brought a new race of vagrant youth between the ages of 14 to 21. In future all youths entering a casual ward in the three counties will be immediately invited – for there can be no compulsion without legislation – to go to the hostel which was formerly the poor law institution at Bicester. Once there, each boy will have his past, his plans and his qualities analysed with the object of establishing or re-establishing him in a useful sphere in life. Meantime he will do productive work. Youths, who through mental or physical defects cannot be made into useful citizens without training, will be passed on elsewhere. I may add that Blackborough Home, near Cullompton, Devon, opened in 1930, has proved so successful in training casuals, or refitting them for work, that this voluntary scheme is now being adopted, on a voluntary basis, of course, by Somerset, Sussex and Cornwall. Blackborough publishes a magazine, 'The Wayfarer'. – *An ex-Poor Law Guardian*

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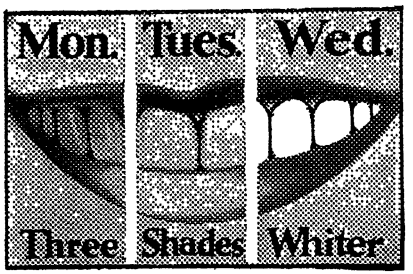
A Travelling Cinema. On the possibilities of this in the countryside an account of an experiment carried out in Devon by means of a travelling cinema apparatus in a van will be found in No. 2 of 'Light, and Sound'. British Instructional Films Limited, which co-operated in this experiment, takes a favourable view of the possibilities. – *A. S.*

J.P.s and their Future. I am in agreement with you on every point. In particular I am glad you point out that it is undesirable that motorists should receive preferential treatment, and that 'some Benches might well be a little more leisurely'. I am strongly in favour of your suggestion that smooth-bores should be brought within the Firearms Act; the cheap double-barrelled .410 pistols are also very dangerous weapons. One of the soundest things you say is that 'a good Bench usually means a better police force'; in my experience a good police force is almost impossible without a good Bench. I hope that every magistrate will read and digest what you say. The worst Benches are to be found in the towns. – *Solicitor*

YOUR article seems to me to be eminently practical and useful. I practised as a junior barrister very considerably before country justices both at Petty Sessions and at Quarter Sessions in the West of England, and I entirely agree with your criticisms and suggestions. Although I know the difficulties of probation work in sparsely populated country districts, I hope that justices will use and extend that side of the court's work to the utmost. – *A Stipendiary*

THAT Increase in Crime. Two points for justices were lately made by the Assistant Under Secretary for the Home Office: (1) the curve of the increase of crime is almost identical with the curve of the increase of unemployment; (2) most of the prizes offered to technical schools and apprentices by the Worshipful Company of Turners were won by lads in the Home Office Schools. – *A. L. J.*

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3 *shades* *in* **3** *days*

IF you think yellow, stained, unsightly-looking teeth are natural, start using Kolynos—a half-inch of this amazing dental cream on a dry brush twice daily. In 3 days you'll see your mistake. Your teeth will look 3 shades whiter! Kolynos—unlike any preparation you've ever used—contains two important ingredients that clean and whiten teeth remarkably. One—the finest cleansing agent known—erases stain and tartar, forms into every tiny fissure and washes away decay-causing débris. While the other ingredient kills the millions of germs that cause most tooth and gum troubles and helps to make teeth absolutely clean. Thus Kolynos gently cleans teeth right down to the natural white enamel. It refreshes the mouth and stimulates the gums. Buy a tube of Kolynos from your chemist to-day

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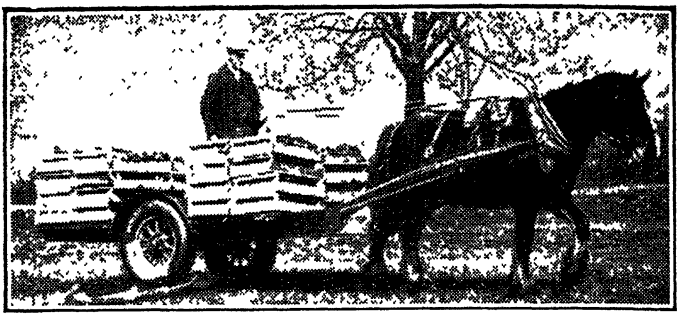
Follow the example of doctors who are daily exposed to germ attacks. Use a few drops of Liquid Kolynos in water as a nasal douche or gargle and you will be practically germ-proof. It is the safest and most reliable antiseptic for the nose, throat and mouth. Get the sprinkler flask to-day. 1/9 of all chemists, or post free on receipt of price. Kolynos (Dept. LT 39), 12, Chenies Street, London, W.C.1.

SORTING the Prisoners. Justices desirous of keeping abreast of things should spend 2s. on *Studies in the Psychology of Delinquency* by Dr. Grace W. Pailthorpe, issued by the Medical Research Council (H.M. Stationery Office). Here is the startling classification of her prison cases: 37 per cent will inevitably become recidivists unless carefully and permanently supervised or segregated, and 13 per cent unless treated in hospitals or asylums. 43 per cent, if psychologically treated, may not become recidivists, but the total unlikely to become recidivists is 7 per cent only. 'The great mistake of the present penal system', says Dr. Pailthorpe, 'is that it is neither deterrent nor reformative.' – *Chairman of a Bench*

A Useful Book. The anonymous author of a valuable but unfortunately-named book, *English Justice* (Routledge, pp. 271, 10s. 6d.) is a solicitor of twenty-five years' experience, with a considerable practice at petty sessions. (It is certainly desirable to get out of the way of saying and writing 'police court', so as to make an end of the notion that police are in any sort of control there.) He suggests that clerks should not be in private practice and certainly not be coroners, but should have a whole-time job in the service of a group of courts. He is for wider provision of counsel for poor persons and for simpler and cheaper appeals – to the county court. He wants all matrimonial questions 'transferred to the county courts, which should be given divorce jurisdiction'. He would continue grand juries, abolish quarter sessions and restrict to barristers the right to appear in county courts. – *J. S.*

COUNTRY PROVERBS.–3. The longer the trousers the shorter the waistcoat.

FROM a 'Morning Post' advertisement: 'Dogs as a paying business taught by post. Also Farming, Poultry, Pigs, Land Agency.' As a kind of extra, no doubt.



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These features have been proved by actual demonstration witnessed by the Press and a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture:—

- Loads 100% heavier were carried at higher speed.
- Ground impassable to iron-tyred carts was easily traversed.
- No ruts were made in soft ground; grass was not bruised or damaged.
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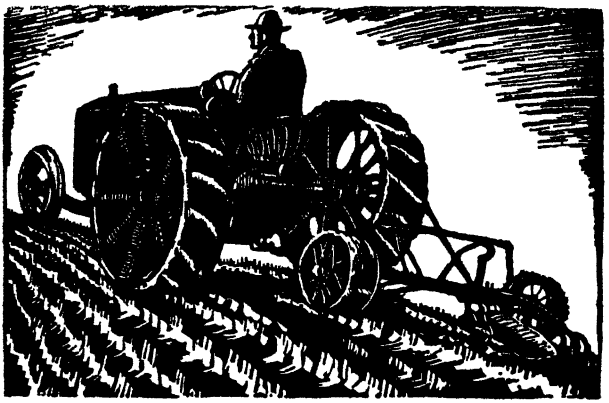
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The Trend of Agricultural Thinking

OPEN Confession about Wages. I always remember reading in one of Surtees's novels years ago, 'Always pay good wages; you will get two men's work done, and will not pay two men's wages'. My paying over standard for ten years has made a considerable impression among my neighbours. About a year ago the headquarters of the N.F.U. sent a notice to branches asking for support for a resolution to the Government for lower wages. I purposely stayed away from the meeting called to consider it, but the branch would not support the resolution. Only a few of the older farmers gave any support to the general idea that there is gain to be got out of lower wages. I do not believe there is any other industry where the personal feelings of the men are of so much importance for successful results. In every single action, every moment of his working time, results depend on the men's active, interested care. Even if the men were convinced of the reasonableness of lower wages, which is unlikely, unless they are reasonably well fed and comfortable at home they cannot be at their best. If present minimums are lowered this is impossible. The wives will not be convinced of the reasonableness of lower wages; discontented wives will quickly put men out of their stride. I am absolutely convinced that on farms, running at a good state of efficiency, wages cannot be lowered with advantage. To argue that, if a farm is not paying, a saving can be affected by paying lower wages is untrue, unless this means doing with fewer men by having more machinery or improved lay-out. To pay the men less is a temptation to farmers who do not know where to turn for immediate cash, but it only hastens the inevitable. Good men, good cattle, and good equipment: that is the only way to farm. If you cannot make the farm pay with these things good it cannot be done by having them inferior. One of the greatest services Major Elliot can do farmers to-day is to save them from the folly of cutting wages. – *R. H. R.*



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NEW BOOKS. The choice for the future does not necessarily lie between the family farm, as we know it, and the projected large-scale farms. In *The New Agriculture*, by O. M. Kile (Macmillan, 10*s*.) there is a discussion of different developments in the United States from the mechanized family farm of 500 acres, run by two men, to the joint stock farming of wheat lands in 10,000-acre units. Even more interesting is the 1,400-cow dairy enterprise, with decentralized crop farms, and cattle breeding units, which combines large scale mechanization and all the advantages of bulk buying and central marketing, with co-operative production based on individual initiative and responsibility. Although the examples are American, the principles are applicable to other countries, and suggestive lines of development are opened up. As Professor D. H. MacGregor and the author of 'My Ten Years' Farming' have suggested, we may have considered agricultural organization too much from the standpoint of the size of farm and not enough from the unit of enterprise which might include a number of farms of varying sizes. – In a sixpenny brochure, *Poverty and Over-Taxation: The Way Out* (1 St. George's Square, S.W.1) the Marquess of Tavistock shows how pamphleteering should be done, and enforces his view that the reform he urges has a direct bearing on the prosperity of country dwellers and on the preservation of rural amenities. – In *Agricultural Credit* (King, 15*s*.) Dr. Alexander J. Boyazoglu has surveyed methods in many countries and much literature. – *Fungi* by J. Ramsbottom, Keeper of Botany at South Kensington (6*d*. in Benn's Library) answers clearly questions of the reader whose interest is excited by the aged lichen on walls of THE COUNTRYMAN office. – In the Oxford Agricultural Economics Research Institute *Go East for a Farm: A Study of Rural Migration* by E. Lorrain Smith (Clarendon Press, pp. 54, 2*s*. 6*d*.) it is admitted that the Scots immigrants to the Eastern counties 'tended to lose, after a time, some of their capacity for hard work and their sparing standard of life; it was not so easy to maintain the pace in the less invigorating climate of southern England, and there was also less need to do so.' – In a similarly priced brochure from the same source, *Manufacturing Milk*, F. J. Prewett produces another of his able surveys of milk marketing and utilization, this time in West Cornwall. – Besides the Ministry's *Pig Products Commission Report* (pp. 108, 6*d*.) H.M. Stationery Office sends us these first-rate Bulletins: *Cabbages and Related Green Crops* (pp. 32, illus., 9*d*.), *Salad Crops* (pp. 94, illus., 1*s*. 6*d*.), *A Simple System of Farm Book-keeping* (pp. 28, 6*d*.), *Weeds and Grass Land* (pp. 104 and 92 illus., 5*s*.) and *Chicken Rearing* (pp. 29, illus., 6*d*.) with which may be mentioned *Starting an Egg Farm*, published by the 'Feathered World' (pp. 43, illus., 10*d*.) – *Management of Milch Goats* (1*d*.) and *The Wheat Act* (6*d*.) – *Fruit and Vegetables for Canning and their Production* is published at 2*s*. 6*d*. by the Farmers' Club.



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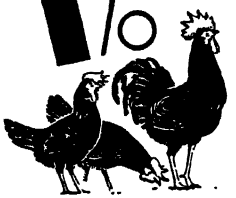
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Problems and Incidents of Bird Life

DRUMMING Snipe. When I last saw my old friend the late James Harting, in his day one of the greatest authorities on natural history, he still believed that the 'drumming' of the common snipe – that strange sound of bleating made by the bird in flight in springtime – was caused by the vibration of the wings. Meves, a Swedish naturalist, in 1858 showed that the sound could be produced by passing the two outer feathers of the tail rapidly through the air, but Harting never could bring himself to accept this, the so-called 'tail theory'; nor was he even convinced, when I told him that I had fastened these two tail feathers at right angles into an arrow, in the position they would be in during the bird's downward flight, and that by shooting the arrow into the air I had obtained, when the arrow fell, the identical sound of 'drumming'. But I was convinced. It seemed to me that I had proved beyond any doubt that the snipe drummed with the outer tail-feathers. I had watched snipe drumming for many hours; and I had noticed that during the spring courtship, when the bird flies round and round above its resting site, again and again alternately beating up and diving down, that the sound was always produced during the downward flight. My arrow experiment confirmed me in my acceptance of Meves's theory. So that I was astonished when lately a good naturalist told me that he believed that this drumming was really humming, in fact vocal. I told him of my experiment, and he said he had read of it. 'But have you ever noticed', he asked, 'that *sometimes* the sound begins before the bird has turned for its dive?' I told him that I had not. 'It was pointed out to me by a friend,' he said, 'who believed that *all* love-calls made by birds were vocal, and who therefore could not accept the "tail theory". Further,' he asked me, 'do you remember what Yarrell says about the drumming of the great snipe – not the common snipe?' 'He says nothing', I replied, for I had looked up the subject

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in my three-volume edition at home. He pointed to the four-volume edition on my office bookshelf. 'Look', he said. I turned over the pages, and found that Yarrell had added to this later edition the following passage: 'At the pairing season, as we learn from Mr. Greiff and Mr. Collett, the Great Snipe has a Lek or playing-ground . . . The male utters a low note resembling bip, bip, bipbip, bipbiperere, biperere, varied by a sound like the smacking of a tongue, produced by striking the mandibles together smartly and in rapid succession; he then jumps upon a tussock of grass, swelling out his feathers, spreading his tail, and drooping his wings in front of the female, and uttering a tremulous sbirr. This is called "drumming" by Mr. Collett.'

And Mr. Collett, of course, called it 'drumming' before Meves ever tried his experiment with the tail feathers of the common snipe. So that the problem of 'drumming', so far as I am concerned, is now re-opened. Is it possible that the common snipe makes a vocal sound, at the same time spreading his tail to the uprush of air as he dives? I can only wait till the spring for the answer. I can never watch the great snipe, for it does not breed in this country, but I long to listen again to the common snipe, drumming – or is it humming? – over the marsh. – *E. P.*

THE Most Adaptable Bird. With the first red glimmer of a December daybreak I was wakened by the twittering of house-martins outside my bedroom window, where they always nest. The familiar note was unmistakable. It comes every morning through the summer months. But house-martins in Scotland in December! It was not the first time that the same old starling had pulled my leg, and it was not to be the last. An hour or two later I was out in the garden tinkering with the car when I heard the strident notes of a pair of oyster-catchers. I looked round for them, and saw the starling, with throat puffed out, perched on the rhone above! – *H. M. B.*

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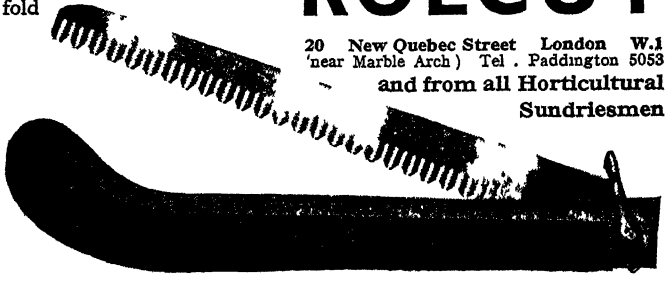
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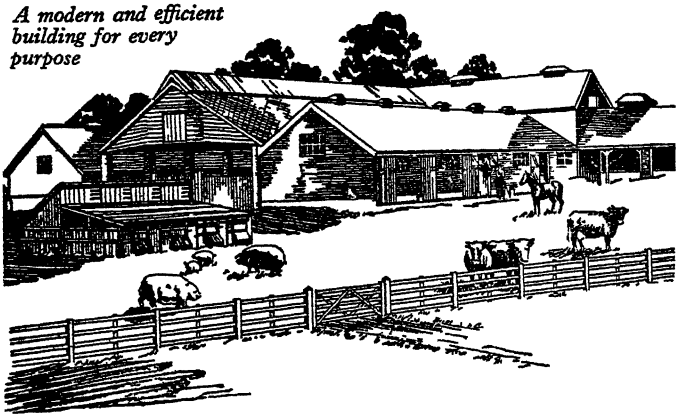


The Garden and Orchard

A CLEMATIS Problem. I have written before now of the problem of my plants of Grevillea Rosmarinifolia and G. Sulphurea, of which the former became a winter flowering shrub after the great frost of February 1929, while the latter retains its habit of flowering through the summer into the late autumn. But I have an equally old problem, to which I have not yet found an answer, in a climbing clematis, Cirrhosa, which I planted some twenty years ago against the south-west corner of my house, and which comes into bloom in time for Christmas. Robinson in 'The English Flower Garden', writes of C. Cirrhosa as 'a vigorous plant which flowers from October to December'. Mine does not do that. It is certainly vigorous, for it is a great bunch of more than twenty feet high, but it does not behave in the normal way described in the books, but in a way peculiarly its own. Every October in recent years – and I cannot remember that it used to do this when I first planted it – the foliage of this clematis withers from its usual deep green to dark brown. The leaves do not fall, they merely die. This is not in consequence of frost, for the plant does not suffer in hard weather, and this year we had no serious frost in October. Then, in the first week of November, new green buds start out all along the stems, and the green tinted creamy flower buds begin to cluster. By Christmas, I know, the plant will have shaken out hundreds of its lovely bells which will bloom on into the spring, and the sap to-day must be running fast. But does the sap die down in October, or what happens? – *E. P.*

PRUNING Clematis. With regard to the question which a reader has sent to me, I cut back those clematis which would stand pruning in March, but I certainly did not mean to imply that this is a safe treatment for all of them. I did not find the horticulturist's catalogue a safe guide on this point

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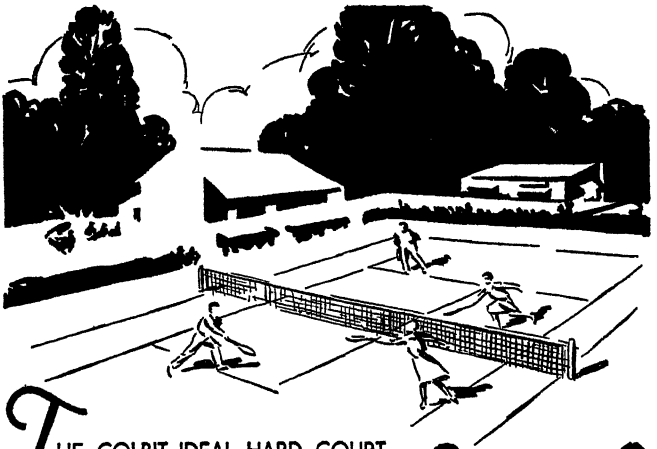
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and had to learn by experience which plants it suited. I believe it is a good plan to keep the plants mulched in winter to protect them from frost and in summer to keep their roots cool. – *Austen Chamberlain*

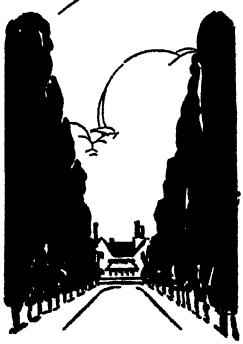
VANISHED Roses. When I wrote in THE COUNTRYMAN of July of a rose which belonged to the house of my childhood, I had little thought of the kindness which awaited me. Two readers, Major G. S. Monro, of Fearn, Ross-shire, and Mrs. Heasman, of Edmonton, have sent me, the one cuttings and the other a plant, on the chance that they may have found my rose; while another correspondent, Mr. Steven T. Byington, of Ballard Vale, Massachusetts, U.S.A., has taken the trouble to send a postcard suggesting that the rose may be Cramoisi supérieur. I am afraid that my search is not yet at an end, but I am sincerely grateful for the gifts I have received, which will be carefully tended in my garden as representing so much unexpected generosity. – *E. P.*

COB Nuts and Filberts. We have but one native nut, the hazel, and from this have been derived the cobs and filberts which to-day are neglected in many gardens. It is certain that the absence of hard food causes teeth to be less good than they should be. For our children's sake then, if not for our own, let us find a corner for some nuts, as they will thrive and grow on stony soils where other fruits would retire defeated. In Kent we have our centenarian bushes trained to a cup shape and carefully pruned each year, but nuts will grow quite well, though not quite so large, on trees allowed to take their own unfettered way. As a screen or dividing hedge they may well replace the fruitless privet or beech and in open woodlands the cultivated varieties may supplant their smaller but still toothsome ancestors. A pergola or pleached walk made of nuts makes an interesting feature; in January it is aflame with golden catkins and in autumn fruitful. For such purposes cordon trees may be used



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which will cover an arched walk quickly. Of the varieties of to-day the Kent cob is most widely planted; the Prize Cob and Cosford are two fine flavoured nuts. The filberts, which ripen on St. Philbert's day and owe their name to this, are sweet and preferred by some to the larger cob. Nuts are often unfruitful in gardens, and when this is so I usually find that they are starved. As with other trees, a small expenditure on manure is a wise investment. Bone meal and kainit in winter and a light sprinkling of some nitrogenous manure in March will often bring fertility back again. Chicken feathers and scraps of wool waste, shoddy and rabbits' fur are excellent and are much used in commercial orchards. – *E. A. Bunyard*

*A Farm Notebook**

I HAVE had a few days in Kent, and my view was confirmed that it is one of the best farmed counties I know. I was interested in the new canning industry. It seems to be successful and quite profitable to the grower, although I suppose the same fate will overtake this infant industry as has overtaken the whole country – so called 'overproduction', which is, I insist, under-consumption, due to lack of purchasing power. If you doubt this, read Farmer Brockway's half-crown 'Hungry England'. You may not agree with all the author says but he gives instances of family after family which, after rent and heating are paid, have only from ¾d. to 2½d. per person per meal left to spend. Also, in Glasgow, in one place in the slums, there were only two lavatories for 123 people. To return to Kent, it struck me that where a man was up to date in his methods he was holding his own. I attended, in the Isle of Wight last month, a sale of a farm which was bought by the tenant. Good land

* The writer is one of the most successful agriculturists in England. The notebook of A Young Farmer will appear in our next issue. – EDITOR



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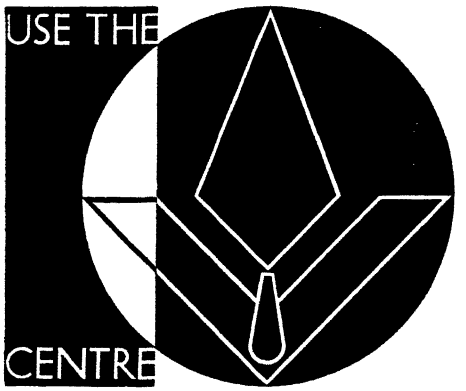
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with a big Elizabethan manor house – rather a white elephant. This sale was an instance of how the present system of tenure robs the enterprising farmer. This farm, which was farmed under the ordinary 4-course system, sheep and corn, had been losing a lot of money up to four years ago, when it was taken by the present occupier. He changed the system entirely, kept no sheep, cut out corn, although keeping the same acreage of plough, and grew sugar beet, potatoes and green crops for the market. He has been quite successful. The point is that he had to pay a thousand pounds more for the farm than he would have done if he had left unchanged the old farming system which had failed. I have seen this again and again, the capable farmer penalized and the misfit getting off scot free. . . . We managed to secure the cup for the farm again. This makes the third time in five years. . . . We have recently bought two of the new carts fitted with pneumatic tyres and roller bearings, and are pleased with them. There is no doubt of their value on this wet land; one horse will draw out a bigger load than two would with an ordinary cart. An excellent thing . . . I was invited to speak to the Oxford Plough Club. I did so, on the 'Future of British Agriculture', and they were very kind.

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THE DESERTED CHURCH. – Going through a little village in a southern county, I saw a church, small but exquisite, the door of which was blocked by a fallen tree. All the windows in the church were broken. Climbing up, I looked through upon a scene of desolation. The interior of the church was as it had been left when the last clergyman walked out – the bible on the lectern, the frontal on the altar, the withered flowers still drooping in the discoloured vases. The pews were rotted and eaten away by rats, and birds had built their nests in the corners and crevices of the church roof. The whole place was filthy and dust lay thick everywhere. – *C.*



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IN the 'good old days', wood floors were formed over the bare earth, and dampness often rotted the joists and boards. Dryness, as well as ventilation, is needed for the preservation of timber as is proved by the decay of many well-ventilated floors, and a remedy will not be permanent unless all dampness is excluded by lining the space under the floor with concrete, or cement mortar made waterproof with

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absorbs and retains heat much more readily than a dense impervious substance such as glass. The cloth is, therefore, just as warm as the air, whereas the glass is much colder. The cold glass robs the air of its heat, and as this air must then get rid of the moisture, it does so by leaving it upon the surface that has chilled it. The obvious remedy for our building-owner was to cover his walls with an absorbent material that would not chill the air, just as one places a rug over linoleum so that it shall not chill the feet. The old-fashioned plasterer's hair mortar mixed with a little plaster of Paris was put on the walls, the finishing coat being of lime putty and sand, also mixed with a little plaster of Paris. No further trouble was experienced, which goes to show that the old-fashioned methods of building often have a great deal to recommend them. – *L. E. W.*

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by M. Sellors

BUT yesterday a shrivelled row
They stood; cold winds blew to and fro
Their withered, rotten leaves of brown
That hung like some decrepit gown
And flapped around their stalks,

Till Frost, kind artist, out at night,
Saw them in all their misery dight,
And pitying, he bent his skill
To make them beautiful, and fill
Their sad hearts with delight.

And later, when the Sun arose,
Red-faced and misty from repose,
He stared in bright astonishment,
And, staring, to their beauty lent
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The Countryman's Wireless

15. *Are Portables Necessary?*

A READER has asked for advice in buying a portable receiver 'with good tone' and below a certain price level. Why do people want portable radio sets, by which I mean those of the suitcase class, or fitted with the carrying handle and self-contained aerial? I see a good many of these sets in the country, but I rarely find anyone who frequently wants to carry his set about except in case of sickness. I do find a lot of folk who somehow connect a portable set with the idea that it is the best kind of battery set when one has no electric light or a plant which will not work an 'all main' set. I have never heard a battery-operated portable set which got anywhere near 'good tone'. I do, however, know a number of battery receivers well below the price of a good portable which give remarkably good tone, some of which can be carried about. Is the installation of a simple outside aerial or inside aerial really such an objection when it is balanced against the increased all round performance of a good battery receiver working on an aerial, such as the New Columbia 3-valve set which appeared at Olympia this year at the very moderate price of £9 17s. 6d.? One does not buy a set every year, and the few shillings involved in putting up an inside or outside aerial are not serious. I invariably find when I visit friends who have a portable set that it is in the place where I saw it last time I called. I do not want to give the impression that there are no good portables. There are. The Murphy is one of them. But I still say that I have not heard a battery portable which is as good as a really good battery transportable on an aerial. When it comes to all-main self-contained sets, I am prepared to modify my views. I heard an instrument the other day – the new Leslie McMichael 3-valve job. This is easily the best 3-valve self-contained all-mains job I have heard, and it is worth every penny of the 20 guineas or thereabouts it costs. Make a point of hearing this instrument.



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Greetings

WE have received such an exceptionally large number of kind messages this past quarter that we venture to print a few extracts:

MR. FILSON YOUNG

I hope you will not mind an ex-editor sending you a word of gratitude and admiration for what I think is the best and truest essay in periodical literature that this country (and therefore any country) has ever seen.

I am making my Christmas present to country friends this year a twelve months' subscription to THE COUNTRYMAN.

MR. ERNEST RHYS

A right good green budget, THE COUNTRYMAN, *it touches reality, every page of it.*

SIR GEORGE DASHWOOD

So much can be done *through* THE COUNTRYMAN.

THE HON. MR. JUSTICE YATES, GOLD COAST

THE COUNTRYMAN *is just the publication I have been looking for and has been a source of great enjoyment.*

MISS SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

The last number is the best and meatiest of them all.

MR. A. H. WILKINS, J.P., KOMGHA, SOUTH AFRICA

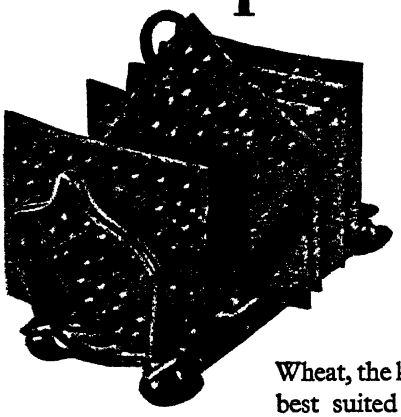
Delighted with THE COUNTRYMAN, *I wish to become a Life Subscriber.*

MR. TOM CLARKE, EDITOR OF THE 'NEWS-CHRONICLE'

Here is my yearly subscription; I very much enjoy THE COUNTRYMAN.

And a subscriber in Australia has had the pleasant thought of sending us some sprigs of boronia.

crispbread that is all wheat



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Country House Catering

12. *Christmas Good Things, by An Innkeeper's Daughter*

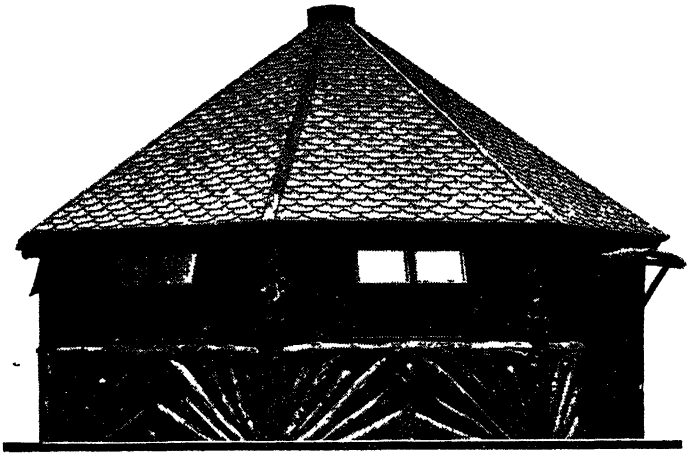
WE made the rich plum cake, puddings and mincemeat in October to allow them to mature. But we can still make parkin, fruit gingerbread and Everton toffee. Here are some family recipes, all over one hundred years old, but all tested recently in our English Folk Cookery kitchen.

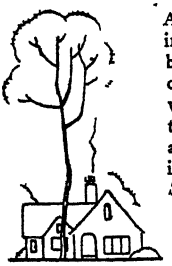
Parkin that is good to eat when freshly made, but will also keep. Ingredients: 12 oz. medium oatmeal; 4 oz. flour; 4 oz. lard; 4 oz. treacle; 4 oz. golden syrup; 1 teaspoonful ground ginger; ½ teaspoonful salt; 2 oz. brown sugar; 1 oz. grated lemon peel; ½ teaspoonful of carbonate of soda; about ½ gill of milk or water. Method: Mix the oatmeal, flour, salt, ginger, and grated lemon peel or candied peel, heat the treacle and syrup, fat, and sugar together; add this mixture to the dry ingredients, and mix thoroughly; mix the soda with a little milk or water and add, beat well; spread the mixture on a greased tin; bake in a moderate oven from 1 to 1½ hours.

Fruit Gingerbread. Ingredients: 1 lb. flour; 1 teaspoonful bi-carbonate of soda; 1 teaspoonful of cream of tartar; 1 lb. Fowler's West Indian syrup; ¼ lb. butter; 1 oz. candied orange peel; 1 oz. candied lemon peel; 1 oz. candied citron peel; 1 oz. sugar; 2 eggs. Method: Sift the flour, bi-carbonate of soda and cream of tartar together; warm treacle and butter in saucepan; cut up the peels, add the sugar and ginger and stir them into the treacle and butter; beat the eggs well, and add them; then stir in the sifted flour etc.; beat well and bake in a moderate oven for 1 to 1½ hours.

Everton Toffee. Put 4 oz. butter in a saucepan to warm till butter has melted and covered the pan, then add ½ lb. treacle and ½ lb. moist sugar, stir slowly with a wooden spoon until it boils. Let it boil 10 minutes then test by dropping a little off the spoon into some cold water; if it is crisp it is boiled enough. Butter a large dish or tin, pour in the toffee and leave till set.

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An Old Christmas Joint. Travelling round the country in search of long-lost and almost forgotten indigenous dishes and cakes as I do (just as the late Cecil Sharp did for folk songs and dances) I have interesting experiences. The other day I visited Castle Coombe and brought back from there a lardy cake hot from the oven. We 'hotted' it up and had some for tea. Then we sent the rest down to our landlady, Mrs. Tanner, of the St. James' Hotel, Henry Street, Bath.

She is a Gloucestershire woman born at Chipping Sodbury where her father and mother were dairy farmers. Next morning she came to my room and thanked me most gratefully for the cake. 'It brought back my mother to me.'

'And how did she make them?' I asked. 'She took a piece of the bread dough on baking days, rolled it and stuck bits of lard all over it, then sprinkled on this some washed and dried currants, folded it up and did the same thing again twice over. She then gathered it up and put it in a round or square cake tin. It was then baked and when turned out was about 3 or 4 inches deep, not a slab cake.' You will say 'but this is not a Christmas joint'. No, it is simply the preliminary conversational canter which is apparently an essential factor in all folk cookery research, for Mrs. Tanner's next remark nearly took away my breath with excitement. 'Have you,' she said, 'ever tasted Bacon Stuffed and Baked?' Here is her recipe: Take a fat piece of the back of good English bacon, soak, and scrape the rind and rust, cut off the bone; with a sharp knife cut through the flap horizontally above the lean, and lay on the lean some good veal stuffing (1 lb. minced veal to a 3 lb. joint of back of bacon), replace the fat, skewer and tie up the joint, score the rind and bake in a good oven for 1½ to 2 hours. We made our stuffing by getting the butcher to mince 1 lb. of lean veal and we seasoned this with pepper, salt and minced dried herbs. This joint tastes like roasted chicken and nothing could be nicer for Christmas; it can be eaten hot for dinner with vegetables and gravy or cold for supper or luncheon – *F.W.*

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Country Books of the Quarter

A GUIDE TO THE BEST READING

WILD Life.—The informed and gracious writing of Eric Parker has a distinction which has given this author a place of his own in outdoor literature. *Shooting Days* (Allan, pp. 305, 12*s.* 6*d.*), a revised and illustrated edition of a book first published fifteen years ago, has all the qualities for which he is esteemed. These memories of and thoughts on shooting in English fields and woods and on the moors and hills of Scotland, Ireland and Wales are 'from the point of view of the naturalist rather than the game-preserver or the expert with the gun'. But as a sport, fishing appeals to him more than shooting. He would not shoot the ringdove in the time of nuptial flight in April. 'Nothing of April is happier than that; the bird flies up with three beats of his strong pinions, poises himself as a diver, stays a moment in mid-air, floats down on outspread wings, beats up again, floats down again; it is the motion of flight of a dream.' For weasels he would propose the defence that 'they eat their fill of young rats and are lithe and graceful and of accomplished habits'.—The plan of Oliver Pike in his acceptable book, *The Nightingale, its Story and Song, and other Song Birds of Britain* (Arrowsmith, pp. 208, 10*s.* 6*d.*) is to give in small type all the ordinary particulars about the birds to which he successively devotes his nineteen chapters, and then to supply a careful and charming account of the nest life of a pair which he has studied from a hide, illustrated by photographs of exceptional quality and intimacy. In no part of England has he seen more nightingales than close to Oxford. For watching birds he equips his hide with a periscope with a tube no thicker than a fountain pen. He has known garden warblers carry on the duties of feeding the young after losing their mates. One of the most remarkable photographs shows an utterly exhausted whitethroat at her nest with spread wings, drooping head and beak open.

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The author has seen several instances of the work of feeding the young overtasking the parents. He thinks that a pair of willow warblers will destroy about 10,000 insects, chiefly caterpillars, in ten or twelve days. He has watched two missel thrushes knock a pine marten out of a tree. His most surprising story is of a bird of this species which, after approaching a man on the road, finally flew to his hand. It was found that there was a parasite as big as a pea over one of its eyes. The parasite could not be dislodged with the nails; a pocket knife had to be used. When the operation was completed and the bird had rested for a few moments it flew off, and, about 200 yards away, burst into song. – *Sporting Interludes at Geneva* by Anthony Buxton ('Country Life', pp. 124, 66 illus., 10*s.* 6*d.*) is a delightful account of bird studies and bird photography. The fastest nest builders known to him are robins and nightingales. 'Nightingales will build a nest in a day.' 'A workman left his coat on the ground at 9 a.m., and when he went to pick it up three hours later, there was a robin's nest, apparently finished, tucked into the fold above the junction of the sleeve.' In nest-finding the author believes that an hour before breakfast is worth all the rest of the day. He conveys the thrill of seeing a bird from the hide at reaching distance, 'about ten times its proper size, an enormous eye looking straight at yours, every feather perfect, a wild creature going about its household duties unconscious, unafraid'. – *Lovable Beasts* by Harper Cory (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 133, 12*s.* 6*d.*) contains accounts of Canadian wild creatures and sixty excellent photographs, mostly full page. The lynxes, porcupines and bears are particularly natural. A bear prone, with its forepaws round and its muzzle in a syrup tin, could not be better. – It is not every bird lover who will be in complete sympathy with all the points of view developed in *Bird Haunts in Wild Britain* by R. N. Winnall and G. K. Yeates (Allan, pp. 227, 10*s.* 6*d.*), a record of scientific observation, illustrated by about thirty excellent photographs,

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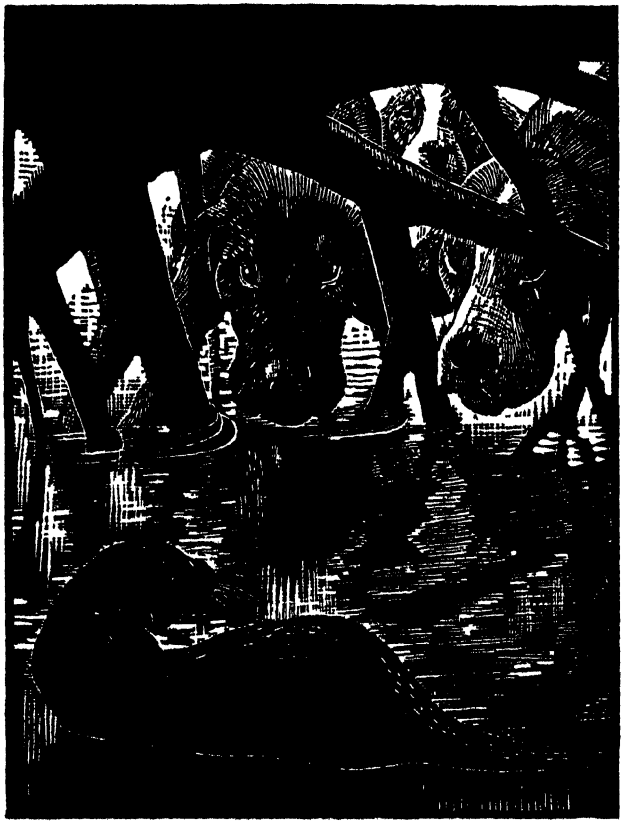
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the heat of the sun. A wild duck is noted as nesting in an ash at a point 40 feet above the ground. – Henry Williamson's *Tarka the Otter*, with two dozen uncommon illustrations by C. F. Tunnicliffe and a fine introduction by Sir John Fortescue (Putnam, pp. 282, 5*s*.) is first rate value. – The third series of Sir Herbert Maxwell's revised *Memories of the Months* has a public ready for it. We all know the author's charming way and range. Read him on snails. 'The common garden snail can sprint at the rate of one mile in about 16 days and 14 hours.' One, 'weighing a third of an ounce, dragged along a smooth table a load consisting of twelve reels of cotton, a pair of scissors, a screw-driver, a key and a knife'. On their resourcefulness, 'one of the great spotted slugs made its escape from a box where it was confined and travelled along the mantelpiece until it came to the edge; then made a survey of the position, and, proceeded to exude slime, whereof all the kind have an almost inexhaustible supply, which it worked with its foot into a slender rope, whereby the animal let itself gradually down till it alighted safely on the fender.' – An African book by the vastly experienced Cherry Kearton, *The Animals Came to Drink* (Longmans, pp. 89, 6*s*.) is remarkably illustrated. The photographs are admirable in their naturalness. Light is thrown on the friendliness of one species with another. On crocodiles the book is noteworthy; the giant is 24 feet. – Frances Pitt, M.F.H., needs no introduction. *Scotty, the Adventures of a Highland Fox* (Longmans, pp. 283, 12*s*. 6*d*.), which is full of illustrations, moves from the Highlands to the Midlands and Cumberland and back again. – *The Common Earth* by E. L. Grant Watson (Dent, pp. 148, 5*s*.) is composed of wireless nature talks of substance and range. As a child the author used 'to sit still on a bank and squeak, and it was not long before the field-mice found their way into my pockets in search of biscuit crumbs'. The noteworthy thing in the book is the adhesion to the belief that 'if danger threatens, adders will swallow their young'. –

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Congorilla by Martin Johnson (Harrap, pp. 236, 12*s.* 6*d.*) is an account of the elaborate expeditions of the author, his wife and party in the Congo region in order to film gorillas and pygmies. The book is not particularly well written, but the reader does learn about gorillas. The author is 'convinced that never in history has an ape kidnapped a man, woman or child'. As to lions, 'we found de Witt surrounded on all sides by lions; we drove them away with stones'. – The author of *Kamongo*, a young scientist, Homer W. Smith (Cape, pp. 191, 5*s.*) is also an American. The creature the name of which provides the title is the lung fish. Many animals hibernate in the winter but the lung fish buries himself in the mud during the hottest months of the year. 'The mud around him dries as hard as rock so that he could not, if he wanted it, get anything to eat. So he has to burn his own tissues. He can last for several years.' What of the 'blind alley' of evolution in which the lung fish finds himself? – *Insect Behaviour* (Allan, pp. 189, illus., 4*s.* 6*d.*) by Evelyn Cheesman, formerly curator of insects at the Zoo, who has studied insects in the most out-of-the-way parts of the world, is a book which supplies the general reader with answers to many puzzling questions, and is interesting in its anecdotage. Because 'the scent of mustard oil guides the cabbage white butterfly in choosing the right leaf for her eggs, she will lay her eggs on other than the food plants of the caterpillars, that is to say on dock, fern, violets, etc., if they are daubed with mustard oil'. The solution of the mystery of where the large blue butterfly caterpillar goes in the winter is that it spends it in an ants' nest. – *Deer Forest Life* (Maclehose, pp. 247, illus., 10*s.* 6*d.*) by Alec. Inkson McConnochie, author of 'Deer Stalking in Scotland' and 'Deer and Deer Forests of Scotland', is packed with the observations and reminiscences of the author, other sportsmen and professional stalkers and keepers. The ignorant are informed that some of the 'heads' that are seen – not only in hotels –



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are picked-up antlers fixed on hinds' heads, but cast antlers are fewer than they might be because deer delight in eating them. As many as four out of half-a-dozen eagles may have had a toe taken off in a trap. – A. J. Sewell's *Dog's Medical Dictionary* is well known. An entirely new and revised edition by F. W. Cousens, M.R.C.S. (Routledge, pp. 336, illus., 7*s.* 6*d.*) is useful. – *Partridge Disease and its Causes* by the chairman of the committee of enquiry and Dr. W. E. Collinge ('Country Life', pp. 104, illus., 12*s.* 6*d.*) discusses the Hungarian partridge, the French and Euston systems, etc., goes fully into the fell work of the enemy, shows that worms act as carriers, and that interbreeding, large winter stocks and insufficient food have much to do with the spread of disease. – The author of *The Joys of Bee-Keeping*, M. G. Kennedy-Bell (Jenkins, pp. 191, 3*s.* 6*d.*) says a friend with rheumatism in her hands had the good fortune to be stung and that, as a result of the formic acid injections, 'she can use her hand more freely than she has done for years.'

Biography and Autobiography. – *John Clare*, by J. W. and Anne Tibble (Cobden-Sanderson, pp. 468, illus., 21*s.*) is the long awaited record of the life of the Northamptonshire peasant poet who suffered so keenly, yet made 'a supreme acceptance, in which peace, and even joy, though intermittent, emerged with sanity out of angry melancholy, hopelessness and madness'. Who has bettered Clare in his field? 'The lank nettles sicken as they seed'. 'Pattering drops decay the crumbling walls'.

> His scythe the mower o'er his shoulder leans,
> And whetting, jars with sharp and tinkling sounds;
> Then sweeps again 'mong corn and crackling beans,
> And swath by swath flops lengthening o'er the ground.

He did indeed search for 'the genuine word'. His neighbours 'are insensible to everything but toiling and talking of it, and that to no purpose'. – When an author occupies thirty-three pages in the British Museum catalogue, and has drawn to himself the regard and affection of as many men

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and women as have a nook in their heart for E. V. Lucas, it is fitting that he should write down his memories and some account of the way by which he has come. And so we all welcome the admirable and unusual *Reading, Writing and Remembering* (Methuen, pp. 355, with 31 plates and 51 illustrations in the text, 18*s*.). How much Lucas is of THE COUNTRYMAN'S way of thinking was shown long ago by his 'Open Road', which, first published thirty years ago, has uplifted more than 85,000 homes. Its author knows the true value of the country: of Arnold Bennett he has written, '"Old Wives Tales" need aloofness, solitude; the more he mixed with people and affairs the more he boiled the pot'. To Lucas himself may be applied his phrase on somebody else, he sees everything 'from a humorist's individual point of view'. Who but Lucas would have treasured for a quarter of a century the epigram:

> The Duke of Rutland urged the *Times* to pray
> For rain; the rain came down the following day.
> The pious marvelled, sceptics murmured 'fluke',
> And farmers late with hay said 'Damn the Duke!'

What Poet Laureate was it who invited 'Mountains and Vales and Floods to share the passion of a just disdain' for railways, and then proposed to buy railway shares? The evidence in full is in this book. We also learn from its pages that Lucas was taught to swim by Bernard Shaw. – *My World as in my Time: Memoirs of Sir Henry Newbolt* (Faber and Faber, pp. 337, illus., 18*s*.) is, in part, the story of a countryman. 'In my cabinet there are the eggs of cuckoos from which I have saved whole broods of wagtails, and those of willow-wrens whom I have supplied with feathers for their bedding. There is the linnet's egg that was laid in a nest lined entirely with the flaxen hair of my three-year-old daughter.' Before Sir Henry was sixteen he 'had stayed in thirty-three counties in England and Wales'. – The second volume of John Drinkwater's autobiography, *Discovery* (Benn, pp. 235, illus., 10*s*. 6*d*.), like

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the Newbolt volume, throws a light on the ways of many poets. In one place we are told of the late Harold Monro's project 'to read poetry in villages without formality, payment, pose, condescension, propaganda or favour: you just give it to them like the eastern story-tellers, who gather people together at street corners'. In Essex, at that time, Monro rented a cottage from the present writer, who arranged a gathering in which Monro's reading of 'The Everlasting Mercy' shocked grown-ups as nobody can be shocked nowadays. – Writing folk must always be interested when a publisher turns to and shows how a book should be done. But there is little to choose between Grant Richards' *Memories of a Misspent Youth:* 1872-96 (Heinemann, pp. 369, illus., 15*s.*) and the Newbolt and Drinkwater reminiscences. It is even like them, a bit on the long side. But it was well worth writing. A score of people we ourselves knew are to the life. We had forgotten how often we went about in a frock coat. – *Mary Webb, her Life and Work* by Thomas Moult (Cape, pp. 288, 5*s.*) is a biography written at the request of the executors and praised by the novelist's husband. Mary Webb would rise at three o'clock in the morning and gather fresh flowers. 'Then, leaving her husband to visit houses and offer apples on a barrow, she proceeded to walk the nine miles from Pontesbury to Shrewsbury in order to take her stand in the market. She offered roses and other blooms at a halfpenny a bunch, and, says Mr. Webb, "although I don't think she earned more than five shillings before she set out in the evening on the nine miles' walk home, she was never dissatisfied. Indeed she felt she had done something beautiful".' – The present writer had the honour of the acquaintance of Mary Kingsley, the explorer, whose *Life* (Macmillan, pp. 280, 12*s.* 6*d.*) has been so worthily written by Stephen Gwynn. No woman of the 'eighties demonstrated more astonishingly the capacity and adaptability of her sex. She was as resolute as the Nightingale but winsome and easy to live with. Although



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often in the tightest of tight places – her courage was V.C. standard – she 'never fired a shot, nor caused a hand to be raised, against a native'. Yet she was a fighting man on occasion. 'In the feeble moonlight I saw a whirling mass of animal matter within a yard. I fired two native stools and the meeting broke up into a leopard and a dog. The leopard crouched to spring on me. I can see its great, beautiful, lambent eyes. I seized an earthen water-cooler and flung it straight at them. It was a noble shot; it burst on the leopard's head like a shell and the leopard went for bush one time.' Her humour was so much a part of her that scientific men were always deploring its insurgence into her writing and lecturing. She was the original of Shaw's Lady Cecily Waynflete, she wrote as well as either Charles or Henry Kingsley, she did valuable scientific work, she was a patriot of a rare sort, and she died of enteric caught in nursing Boer prisoners, 'one of those simple beings to whom nothing seems an impossibility that is noble and just'. – *Talleyrand* by Duff Cooper (Cape, pp. 399, illus., 12*s.* 6*d.*) is an animated and fascinating account of the remarkable career of the extraordinary personage who, though he ended his days in Victorian times, received his early training under a relative who was born when James II was king. As a child he beheld the feudal system. 'Every Sunday the principal gentlemen from the surrounding country would come to accompany his grandmother to church. After the ceremony all the poor and sick would collect in the hall of the château. Two sisters of charity would interrogate them and prescribe the remedy. The Princess would then say where it was to be found, and one of the gentlemen in attendance would proceed to get it. The château was full of medicines and unguents prepared every year in accordance with ancient recipes'. – *The Life of Joseph Wright* by his wife (Oxford University Press, 2 vols., pp. 710, 30*s.*) is a memorial of particular value of the remarkable man who will always be known for his great six volume 'English Dialect Dictionary' –

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the cost was £25,000. Nothing in 'Self Help' eclipses the achievement of Wright who at fifteen could not read and within the space of a very few years acquired language after language and became one of the outstanding scholars of his generation. Wright would never have any dog of his taught to walk to heel, 'for he considered the practice a relic of mediaeval times, when the dog must walk behind his master, as a protection from a foe who might come upon him stealthily and stab him in the back'. – Everyone who has known Sir Martin Conway or, in his later incarnation, Lord Conway of Allington, must have wished that he would write just such a book as *Episodes in a Varied Life* ('Country Life', pp. 284, illus., 15*s*.) An unusual boyhood and youth, a man's life as mountaineer, connoisseur of art, archaeologist, restorer of a castle, author and M.P., all sorts of experiences and a sense of humour – there was the material and equipment for the production of a lively, worth-while book. And here it is with all sorts of charming illustrations. In the old lease of his Kensington house the tenants bound themselves 'not to let our cows wander into the lane and to prevent the public acquiring a right of way across our field'. – *The Din of a Smithy* by J. A. R. Stevenson, with a pithy foreword by the Rt. Hon. Walter Runciman, M.P., his uncle, illustrated with 124 impressive photographs and sketches (Chapman and Hall, pp. 190, 15*s*.) is the stimulating story of how a Harrovian apprenticed himself as a blacksmith, and set up and carries on the Devon Smithy, now famous for satisfying work to be seen all over the kingdom. – It was a meritorious work of H. Wallis Kew and H. E. Powell, to produce this modestly-entitled 'collection of materials for an account of the life and works' of *Thomas Johnston, Botanist and Royalist* (Longmans, pp. 159, illus., 8*s*. 6*d*.) He was the author of the first British Flora, the editor of Gerard's Herbal, a Royalist soldier of exceptional bravery, a diligent traveller and collector, a friend of Thomas Fuller, John Ray and other notables, and an

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N B. A copy of the current issue of 'COUNTRY-SIDE' magazine (a quarterly companion to the above Diary) will be sent post free to any address in the world for one shilling The magazine was founded by E. Kay Robinson in 1905

excellent man. – *No Phantoms Here* by J. L. Hodson (Faber and Faber, pp. 310, 7*s.* 6*d.*) consists of fifty lively and informing chats with celebrities.

Poetry. – The Laureate's telling of *The Tale of Troy* (Heinemann, pp. 60, 5*s.*) bears an inscription of thanks to 'the beautiful speakers who first told this tale on Midsummer Night, 1932'. This 're-telling of old stories with a new vision and a new style' is moving, and many readers must wonder whether *The Tale of Troy*, direct and simple, might not be told in their villages also.

> And all this time the little owls from Ida
> Came hooting over us: and presently
> A mighty, savage owl perched upon Troy
> And snapped his iron lips, and flapped and screamed,
> Almost one saw the yellow of his eyes.
> Then he launched forth, stealing into the air.

The work is full of the memorable lines that we have learnt to look for in the pages of John Masefield, and the 'new vision' is seen in the final couplet:

> With all that world of murder on our backs
> We bore our load of misery from Asia.

To know Edmund Blunden's quality in *Halfway House* (Cobden-Sanderson, pp. 97, 6*s.*) we need take but one sip:

> And from the damson trees the blackcap's song
> Shall swell the anthem of their crowding flowers.

The country reader of *The Best Poems of* 1932, selected by Thomas Moult and decorated by Elizabeth Montgomery (Cape, pp. 127, 6*s.*), the eleventh in the annual series, will note the small number which are without rural lines. Here are a few only of the rural lines:

> And then it is autumn, the high, full, culminant fever (J. C. Squire)
> Across the mesh of feathered pine (Anne Hamilton)
> Forget the marshes where wing-shadows pass (H. M. Salisbury)
> And reedy desolation edged with rose (Geoffrey Johnson)
> Wild, wind-wetted, growing old unnoticed (Irene Haugh)
> On the lyre of the trees (Herbert E. Palmer)
> Hemlock and ragwort, plantain, parsley and dock (Louis Golding)
> When Autumn shuffles leaves of gold (W. H. Davies)

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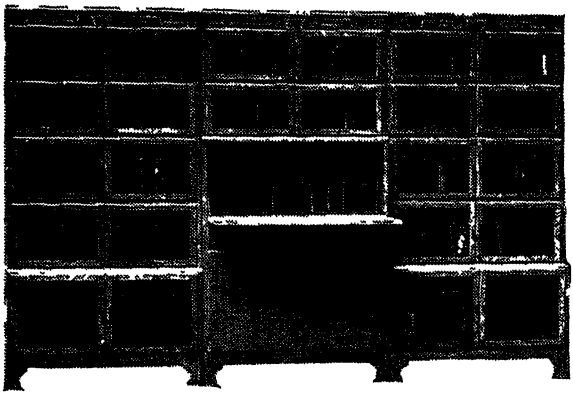
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The Davies line is in one of the poems in his new volume' *Poems* 1930-31 (Cape, pp. 48, 3*s.* 6*d.*), wherein he sings in his tender way

> When I remember my own wilful blood,
> The waste, the wildness of my early years –
> Shall I not chuckle with those birds, when they
> With wicked music waste my sweetest pears?

James Thorpe has contributed exactly the right kind of illustrations to his edition of *Jane Hollybrand* (Howe, pp. 160, 5*s.*), the improving poems of Edwin Foot, of H.M. Customs, circ. 1867. We shall not say that, even on the elevated plane trodden by this bard, nothing will be found to bring the blush of shame to the cheek of modesty; what sane readers will do is to laugh till they cry. Subscribers who complain that there is a dearth of actable pieces for village halls should stage 'Jane Hollybrand'.

General Literature. – In contrast with so much wasteful and troublesome printed matter which leads nowhere in particular is Havelock Ellis's *Views and Reviews: Second Series*, 1920–32 (Desmond Harmsworth, pp. 237, 10*s.* 6*d.*). As ever, he is wise, variously learned, lucid and urbane. It is with pleasure that we draw our readers' attention to these brief, cogent and always readable essays. The frontispiece is a noble portrait of the author by his publisher. – His mental activity, his public spirit, his facility and his companionable humanity make H. G. Wells the master journalist of his time. In *After Democracy* (Watts, pp. 255, 7*s.* 6*d.*) he lives once more in the day after to-morrow. He does not ask his readers to accept; he asks them to consider, to do a day's work, to forget those things which are behind and press forward to the things which are to come. Here is a characteristic sentence, 'We do not want those to meddle with the affairs of the world who have neither the patience nor the ability to learn'. As the Danes say, 'Thanks for food'. – After this Wells book, should be read *The Intelligent Man's Guide through World Chaos* by the well-known



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economist, G. D. H. Cole (Gollancz, pp. 672), a quarter of a million words of amazingly clear and impartial writing at the remarkable price of five shillings. – J. B. S. Haldane's *Inequality of Man* (Chatto and Windus, pp. 306, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is far-reaching, meaty, vivacious, highly provocative. In the Sumerian civilization, about 2500 B.C., 'we find sanitary conveniences with adequate drains in the houses, better than those of many English cottages to-day'. It is 'fairly probable that many people will live to see the production of edible fats and oils from coals and mineral oil, and sugar and starch from such materials as wood pulp and straw'. – On his titles alone – *Lemon Verbena* (Methuen, pp. 192, 6*s.*) is his latest – E. V. Lucas, even if he were not the rarely accomplished person he is, could get a public for his books. And the odd things he knows. We have all heard of Puritan names like Kill-Sin Mitchell, but the author of *Lemon Verbena* has discovered a More-Fruit Fowler! The way the essayist has with him! 'Having found my first snowdrop of the year, I did what I always do with that flower of promise: I held it above my head to look within at its green lines, green which is like no other variety of that colour, and again to marvel at the beauty of it, a beauty so often ignored, for the snowdrop usually is at our feet with only its drooping whiteness visible'. And then the account of the failure of the attempt of three people, separately and collectively, to persuade 'a self-centred and complacent lady of great wealth to part with a few roots of an anemone which was running wild beneath her trees.' In considering the Old Masters' treatment of the Nativity has anyone but E. V. L. described the attitude of the ox and the ass: 'their blend of benevolence, piety and surprise'? And who but this alert traveller has discovered that what the golden oriole really says, in that single note of his, 'the box-wood flute under water', is 'Coeur de Lion'? – In E. F. Benson's *As We Are* (Longmans, pp. 312, 15*s.*) ranging from 1914 to 1932, living persons are freely handled. 'A Modern Revue', as it is called, is performed before the back

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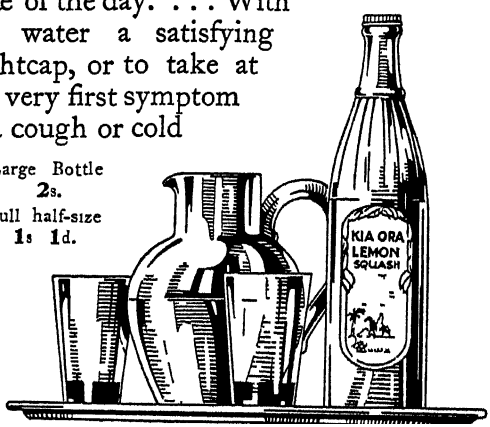
cloth of an old mansion. – The pleasant and profitable essays in *Criticism*, Desmond MacCarthy's second volume (Putnam, pp. 323, 7*s.* 6*d.*) range from Defoe to David Garnett; in the author's view, the decay of the country gentleman is due not only to taxation but to the new longevity: 'a man is not going to hang about as his father's son till he is sixty to qualify'. – Cut off, as he or she often is, from a large library, the issue of a cheap edition of the *Cambridge History of English Literature* is of importance to the resident in the country. The work is in fifteen volumes, they average more than 400 pages apiece, and are only five shillings each. The Cambridge University Press, as its way is, has done the thing handsomely. The type rivals in blackness the 'Times's' newest and the volumes open pleasantly flat. It is evidence of the scope of the work that one volume is wholly index – double column in the smallest type THE COUNTRYMAN uses. On the very first page 'attachment to nature' is set down as one of the 'chief constituents of English literature'. As we open the work at random we come on the suggestion in More's 'Utopia' of conscription for agriculture rather than for war. How many people who know Tusser's 'Points of Good Husbandry' recognize that it goes to the tune of 'Bonnie Dundee'? There is a special chapter in the work on 'Writers on Country Pursuits and Pastimes'. What a boast was that of Evelyn in his 'Sylva', 'Many millions of timber trees have been propagated and planted at the instigation and by the sole direction of this book'! – 'John Bull's Other Island' told Britons more of Ireland than many speeches, and some treatises; and Denis Johnston, who has genius, brings us, in *The Moon in the Yellow River* and *The Old Lady Says 'No!'* (Cape, pp. 272, 6*s.*), entertainingly and often movingly, up to the eve of the accession of Mr. de Valera. – *To-morrow's Yesterday* by John Gloag (Allen and Unwin, pp. 184, 16*s.*) a well-known advertising expert and the author of a recent architectural work, is clever and mordant. – *The Cambridge Miscellany* series could not well

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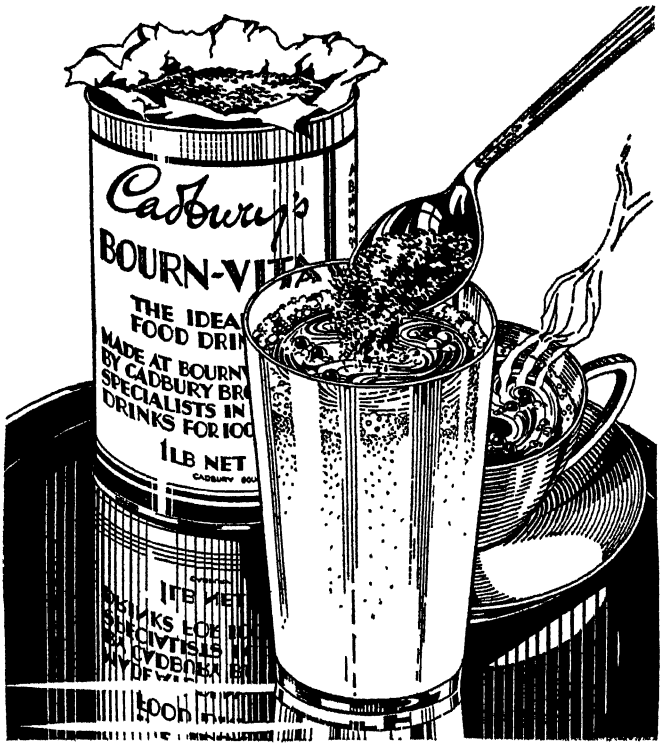


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be better in looks, and could there be a sounder selection than Cecil Torr's *Small Talk at Wreyland*, Charles Sorley's *Poems*, George Sturt's *Small Boy in the Sixties*, G. G. Coulton's *St. Bernard and St. Francis*, T. R. Glover's *Influence of Christ in the Ancient World* and Frank Kendon's *Small Years*? (Cambridge University Press, 3*s.* 6*d.* each). – *Panorama* by the entertaining writer, Charles Graves, (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 318, 6*s.*) includes an interview with the Rev. E. E. Dorling, managing director of the Epsom Grand Stand Association. After the Oaks it takes seventy scavengers three weeks to clear away the litter. An all-the-year-round job is smoothing the turf, which is done by squads of six men who do about thirty-five yards a day. – The warden of that fine country school Bembridge, J. Howard Whitehouse, shows once more in *To My Boys* (Cambridge University Press, pp. 140, illus., 6*s.*) what school talks may be.

History. – To his history of England George Macaulay Trevelyan, O.M., now contributes a noble volume *England under Queen Anne: Ramillies and Union with Scotland* (Longmans, pp. 473, with maps, 21*s.*). Not the least valuable chapters are those which picture, so vividly and with such copious references, the condition of rural Scotland. 'Private jurisdictions over tenants, civil in some cases, civil and criminal in others, were common, though such feudal courts had long since ceased in England.' 'Rents were paid more than half in kind.' The walls of a farmer's house were of 'turf or unmortared stone, stopped with grass or straw; chimneys and glass windows were rare; the floor was the bare ground; in many places the cattle lived at one end of the room.' Although the material standard of life was so low, 'to avoid the receipt of alms was a passion with common folk more decidedly than in wealthier England'. As the historian points out, 'the Scottish peasant, cramped in feudal bonds and medieval poverty, without representation in Parliament, took all the keener interest in the kirk session of the

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parish, the presbytery of a dozen parishes, the provincial synod and the national general assembly. In all these the laity were represented as they were not in the purely clerical convocations of York and Canterbury. Week in, week out, the kirk session and the superior court of the presbytery were trying cases of alleged swearing, slander, quarrelling, breach of Sabbath, witchcraft and sexual offences'. Yet the parish church, 'with its roof of turf or thatch, was a small and tumble-down building'. – E. V. Lucas is not the only omnivorous reader who fails to relish Surtees, but as unlikely a man as William Morris placed him 'in the same rank as Dickens as a master of life'. Anthony Steel, the author of *Surtees' England* (Methuen, pp. 303, with two pages in colour and ten in monotone, 7*s.* 6*d.*) has done a thing and done it well, which, in contemplating the volumes of Surtees, we have often thought would be worth while, that is, reproduced from their pages their singularly honest picture of the rural England of his day, 1803–64; 'the miserable hut-like cottages', 'the poor turnip-pullers shivering in their shawls', 'the pedlars' unhappy donkeys with everything from a pound of whitening to a copper coal scoop', 'an old parish constable running frantically about a fair and demanding assistance from everybody in the name of the Queen', and so on. When we turn to the domestic scene we read of the lamps which 'burnt inferior oil, smoked, smelt and expired poisonously during important dinner parties'. As to the roads, 'Mind you are engaged to us the next full moon' is significant. – *Fifty Years:* 1882–1932 (Butterworth, pp. 224, 7*s.* 6*s.*) a composite picture by twenty-seven contributors of eminence, is an acceptable collection of the reminiscences which lately appeared in the 'Times'. Illustrated with revelations from old photographs, 'Q' does not hesitate to say that the Oxford man is two inches taller than in his day.

Fiction. – The country tales of Sylvia Townsend Warner in *The Salutation* (Chatto and Windus, 7*s.* 6*d.*), have spiritual and physical apprehension, sureness, humanity and wit.

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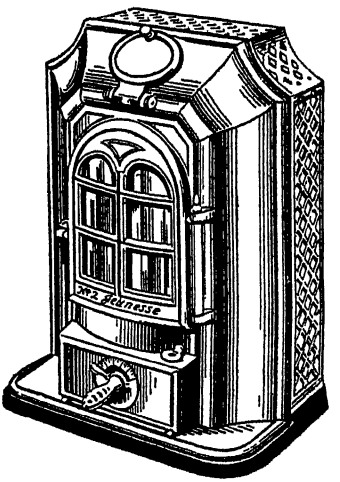
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> Chiming so pleasantly,
> As if nothing were the matter.

There have been so many woeful novels of sordid struggle on small farms, on which parents and offspring would 'neither 'gree nor bide separate' that *The Fallow Land* by H. E. Bates (Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*) may lack a hearty reception. But the author of 'The Black Boxer' and other tales writes with distinction, and his people on the holding near St. Neots are real human beings. – There is novelty, vigour, imagination and candour in the rural sketches of H. A. Manhood, *Apples by Night* (Cape, pp. 315, 7*s.* 6*d.* net). – The new Brett Young, *The House under the Water*, (Heinemann, 8*s.* 6*d.*) is a 691 pager, the scene of which is laid chiefly in North Wales. 'I'm what is called a gentleman farmer', said the hero, 'that is to say, villagers touch their caps and the gentry ignore me.' A bit of rural wisdom is, 'You may live without friends; you cannot live without neighbours!' – *Friday's Moon* by Cecilia Willoughby (Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is rural Yorkshire a century ago. It drops just a little into the dialect and is full of 'characters'. 'I said when 'e measured me, "Now see I'ave room for me chilblains". He said 'e would allow for four on each foot, and I've gotten five.' – In *Strange Assembly*, a volume of new short stories by well-known writers (Unicorn Press, pp. 334, 7*s.* 6*d.*) our attention was arrested by a powerful tale by Stephen Graham about an artist on Nova Zembla, where there is one post a year and one steamer. In summer there is three months' day without darkness; in winter three months' darkness without the light of day. – Scots who

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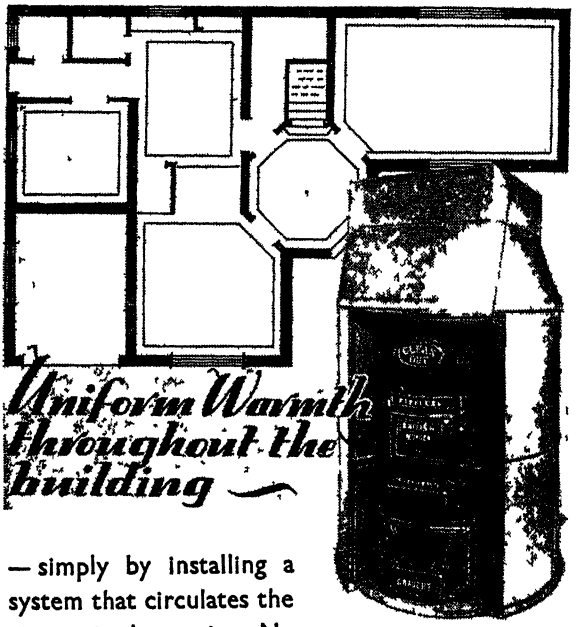
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want outdoor fiction in a Scots atmosphere independent of dialect should not miss the unusual sketches in *The Four Strangers* by Edward Albert (Nicholson and Watson, pp. 283, 7*s.* 6*d.*) – *Strawberry Roan*, the second novel by A. G. Street (Faber and Faber, 7*s.* 6*d.*) may not ascend the heights or sound the depths, but the people are as they are to be found in Wiltshire, and the reader passes through the agricultural year as if he were on the farms. The story runs so easily that the art of its contriver may be underrated. – *Call Home the Heart* by Fielding Burke (Longmans, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is evidently a tale of some merit, of a remote American mountain farm, of mill life and of the victory of the farm over the mill; but 432 packed pages of smaller type than novels are usually printed in is, in a busy world, conscienceless. – *English Comedy* (Dent, pp. 283, 7*s.* 6*d.*) by John C. Moore ('Dixon's Cubs', 'Dear Lovers' and 'Tramping through Wales') is a clever yarn of wandering through the country in low company. A stall at a fair 'was kept by a very dismal old man who made his living by acting as a sort of adviser on birth control'. – In the Kingfisher Library (Arnold, 3*s.* 6*d.*) there has been re-published *Shepherd Easton's Daughter* by Mary J. H. Skrine (pp. 336) – Dorcas who 'downright shocked the Reverend 'cause I told'n I didn' never do no sins'. It is, as Evelyn Underhill points out, a story of unusual insight. – In *Butler's Gift* by Martin Hare (Longmans, 7*s.* 6*d.*) the Irish Protestant rector and his son do not make friends with the bottle as the Rev. Patrick Brontë and Branwell did, and the three daughters of the rectory, though girls of parts, are not Currer, Acton and Ellis Bells; but existence at Kilmartin is reminiscent of Haworth. The scenes of clerical life, and the account of the doctor and the gunmen yield a vivid impression of an aspect of latterday Ireland. – *Wedding Day and Other Stories* (Pharos, 6*s.*) by Kay Boyle, an American who works in the manner of James Joyce and Gertrude Stein, gets over what she wants to say. The sketches are in various grades of difficulty for the novice,



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and there is a rural flavour in several of them. – Hitherto the detective novelist, when he left London, has commonly plotted in the moated grange or the ivied castle, or even at the railway station. In *Cottage Sinister* (Longmans, 7*s.* 6*d.*) by Q. Patrick the deeds of horror are done in a Somerset cottage and its vicinity. The *Bypass Murder* by David Frome (Longmans, 7*s.* 6*d.*) also makes its trip to the country. Both authors put in their touches of character, as well as keep their secret until the last pages, but mechanical fiction has to pay its penalty. – *Anna Priestly* by Evelyn Herbert (Cape, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is a tale of a mean street in a Breconshire mining village. – The scene of *A Few People* by M. L. Haskins (Lovat Dickson, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is a Cotswold farm. –

Oversea. – It is people who have been for a period of years in the Far East who will recognize the merit of R. H. Tawney's *Land and Labour in China* (Allen and Unwin, pp. 207, 7*s.* 6*d.*). The population of four out of twenty-eight of the provinces, we may well remind ourselves, exceeds that of France, Germany and Great Britain combined. The feature of the agriculture is the unimportance of animal husbandry; 'land capable of growing food for human consumption cannot be spared for raising beasts'. 'The acreage devoted to wheat is slightly larger than that devoted to rice and this takes no account of maize, barley and other grain crops. There is no landed aristocracy'; it may be said that roughly half the peasants own their land. More than a third of the peasants' holdings are below an acre and a quarter. The urgent problem of China is to create an effective administration, however small the area, and work outwards. We certainly agree that 'it is in herself alone, in her own historical culture, reinterpreted in the light of modern requirements, that she will find the dynamic she needs; the most fundamental achievements of her revolution are to come'. – *Flesh of the Wild Ox* by Dr. C. S. Coon (Cape, pp. 367, with effective drawings by Ruth Reeves, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is a new kind of book, a scientific study in the form of a

'Cookery is become an art, a noble science; cooks are gentlemen'

Burton, Anatomy of Melancholy

ENGLAND is looking up. In the majority of restaurants they now dust the hors d'œuvres every day. And at home our women folk are reverting to the belief of that immensely successful *bon viveur*, Arnold Bennett, that 'until the nature of man is completely altered, cooking is the most important thing for a woman'. Divorce has too often begun in the kitchen and women whose servants have been pruned by the slump, must still remember that 'civilized man cannot do without cooks'. Let them then descend into their kitchens with heads held high, proud in their mischievous misreading of Jerrold's epigram on evolution· 'the greatest animal in creation, the animal who cooks'.

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story, of the remarkable countrymen of the Moroccan Rif. The author is unusually successful in reproducing the feelings and habits of these people, and has no pruderies.



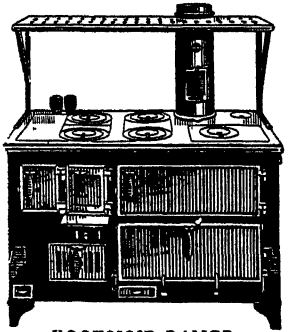
From 'Flesh of the Wild Ox'
AGRICULTURE IN THE RIF

Alexander's Christmas Gift

by 'Salfario'

ALEXANDER, as I have explained, was the best friend our Conservancy Board ever had. We knew him as the 'water watcher', but there was an occasion when he was made to look foolish. The village had the laugh on him all through the summer and well into the autumn. It was only when winter had cast us all into a drowsy inactivity that Alexander rose above us all and became himself again. And this rehabilitation had about it a completeness that was just Alexandrian.

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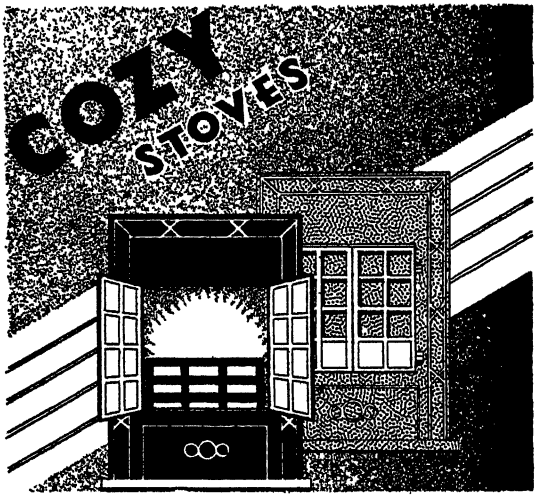
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them for they are good to see and most pleasant to eat. The local grocer's man was a poor angler – always fished down stream – and a poor fellow in health and all else. Alexander had word that this sorry fellow was adding to the family table an occasional dish of smolts. So, as he was in duty bound to do, Alexander watched him. On this spring evening the grocer's man was wading down a well stocked pool. He had a mackintosh that was very old. It trailed in the water well below his knees. Ever and anon a smolt was hooked. When unhooked it was just slipped into the pocket of the wretched coat. In time Alexander made his entry on the scene and called to the grocer's man to show his catch. The man refused. Alexander accused him of having his pockets full of smolts. The man just jeered. The guardian of the law then waded in to where this wicked fellow stood – only to find there were no bottoms to the pockets of his coat and all the smolts had long since tailed away towards the sea.

The story swept the village. The grocer's man made sure that there was much laughter at the expense of Alexander. After a while, as winter came, the author of this wicked merriment fell sick. For many weeks he could not do his job of work. Many of us did our little to help him and his dependents as the days rolled on to Christmas. Even when that time of kindly thoughts drew near he was only on his feet again and but little more. There was no memory of his joke when we saw him, poor in body and ill clad. Three days before Christmas I was shopping in our neighbouring town. I was entering the main store when I came face to face with Alexander. 'If ye'el just spair me a meenit, sir,' said he, in his soft and gentle way, 'ye could help one in a deeficulty. Would ye object to addressin' this label? If a' did it ma'sel nae doubt he'd know my writin' frae his license. Am wantin' to send this parcel to that puir body that ye'll well remember. It's a verra nice new mackintosh.' I addressed the label and was rewarded by a smile from Alexander.

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IN the July COUNTRYMAN I read Salfario's 'Lapses' with great sympathy. We all do it sometimes, especially as we get older. As he says, wading on the rough bottom in fishing up stream in Northern quick-flowing water is no easy matter. It is a young man's game and calls for great skill, especially when, instead of gut, the cast is horse hair. I have fished in most of the streams north and south, wet and dry, and I have come to the conclusion that some of the wet fly anglers are among the cleverest followers of Izaak. – *J. H.*

COARSE fishing and the Thames are the subjects of Patrick R. Chalmers' *At the Tail of the Weir* (Allan, pp. 280, 12*s.* 6*d.*) which will be welcomed by a public which appreciates his experience and his wit. It is not only fish that interest him. He tells us that there may be a dozen varieties of shells in the Thames. The biggest beetle is the great water-beetle. He is two and a half inches long and a vegetarian. The brown water-beetle, an inch and a half long, kills and eats him. – After half a century's angling, the veteran fisherman, Henry Lamond, conservator of Loch Lomond, has written his autobiography, *Days and Ways of a Scottish Angler* (Allan, pp. 136, illus., 12*s.* 6*d.*) which is instructive and lively in a wide field. – *A Humble Fisherman* by Morley Roberts (Grayson, pp. 260, illus., 10*s.* 6*d.*) and *Edwardians Go Fishing* by George Cornwallis-West (Putnam, pp. 278, illus., 10*s.* 6*d.*), will be secured by those who remember the long list of Morley Roberts' novels and his varied life, and the special experiences of the author of 'Edwardian Hey-Days'. As for example (the Archbishop of Wales *loq*): 'One early morning I was pledged to take a wedding at 8 a.m. It looked like fishing and I made for the river. I was half a mile from the church and the sport was poor. I went on till the last moment, when I hooked a big trout, which took a good deal of play. There was no room in my bag and I was compelled to stuff the fish into my light overcoat and bolt for the church. There was nothing for it but to put on my cassock and surplice and go through the ceremony with the fish in my pocket.' – It is given to Dr. E. A. Barton to be a fisherman of repute, an excellent writer, a skilled photographer and something of a rhymester, so *Chalk Streams and Water Meadows* (Murray, pp. 142, 7*s.* 6*d.*), is a book of learning and entertainment. It records the reply, 'Well, zur, Oi be better than what Oi were but Oi beant so well as Oi were before Oi be as bad as Oi be now.'

Our Readers' Motoring Tales – 20

AN American subscriber, visiting the Yellowstone Park, lunched in his car, and, when he got out in order to stroll round, left in an accessible position a pot of honey. On his return he found a baby bear asleep in the car with the honey pot, empty, beside him.



Cheery Optimism

OPTIMISM, when circumstances warrant it, is wholly praiseworthy, but misplaced optimism concerning the continuity of life may have dire results

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AS ONE COUNTRYMAN TO ANOTHER

By what we have already said, you see our intentions – *Cromwell*

THAT the new Minister of Agriculture has begun well is not of the first importance. What matters is that he has the opportunity of ending well.

The New Doctor

Whitehall Place has seen not a few devoted Ministers of Agriculture. But there has so often been one thing lacking. Frequently it has been an amenable Parliament. Sometimes it has been vision. More than once it has been a practical knowledge of agriculture. Not seldom it has been that 'something of the Shorter Catechist' which gives roots and ardour to a statesman. Major Elliot seems to have all the blessings. Whether he is planning at Whitehall Place or whether he is speaking in the House of Commons he knows that he has behind him an unprecedented majority. He was brought up on a farm, farms his own land, has, as intimates, farmers of the best type, and is himself a skilled worker in agricultural science. He has that substance and intensity that come from the Borders and a mind awake to the future. If Major Elliot cannot do from Whitehall Place and the Front Bench, the work for which the countryside is crying out, it is difficult to think of any other Minister of his Party doing it. If the work is left undone it is impossible, as things are at present, to take too serious a view of the consequences to this country.

In what is being undertaken officially for better marketing, for enlightenment and for better prices, and unofficially, so far, by the Society of Friends – what an excellent speech that was of Sir

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Francis Acland's! – there are immense possibilities. But Major Elliot will do poor justice to his powers, his candour and his opportunity if he does not set himself gravely to consider a basic question which is not comprised in the subjects with which the Ministry of Agriculture is dealing. No man of knowledge and responsibility who has studied the agricultural situation can limit himself to marketing, education and prices. If the rural life of Great Britain is to be what our national welfare imperatively demands, a great deal of money must be cheerfully laid out in the countryside. The special conditions of the time, and justice to the nation as a whole require that, as a preliminary to that expenditure, the conditions in which so much agricultural land is held shall be brought under review. The tax-payer will not suffer an endowing of a system so much of which, from every practical point of view, is in need of rearrangement. Here is no question of Party politics. The facts are well-known to the Minister and are present to the minds of such elder statesmen of agriculture as the Chief Scientific Adviser, Sir Daniel Hall, and the Director of the Agricultural Economics Research Institute Oxford University, Mr. C. S. Orwin, the younger agricultural economists, the ablest farmers and the most far-sighted land-owners. We keenly regret that the question of the future control of farm land should ever have been the subject of Party controversy. It is a question for rural experts in all parties. Certainly the last thing that was in the mind of Mr. Orwin when he wrote his 'Tenure of Agricultural Land' and 'The Future of Farming,'

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was Party politics. If Major Elliot, with his practical knowledge, his ability, his vigour and his unparalleled majority in Parliament, leaves office without going to the bottom of many agricultural difficulties he will be but another politician fallen by the way. By a great deal of hard work, by suffering many things from Party men, by running the risks that young men should run, by taking the sound counsel that is to be had in plenty and by resolutely acting on it, by thinking always of that Britain of to-morrow on which our hopes are set, he has the opportunity of helping, in a very special way, to establish that self-respecting rural life which is necessary to our worthy survival in the comity of nations. Among likely Prime Ministers in time to come there is none likelier, we suppose, than the present Minister for the Countryside. If he is one day to be Premier let him reach the office in honour as a Minister not only of the town but of the country. To talk with some people about the future of the countryside, it might be thought that the vast changes that are in motion all over the world were hidden and that our rural problems could wait. They cannot wait. Happily there are elements in the present Parliament capable, if they will brace themselves to the effort, the need and the opportunity, of doing more deliberately – and with more general acceptance – what will be inevitably attempted by the next Government. They have their great chance. But, as President Hoover has found out, the biggest majorities crumble and crumble quickly. In dealing with our sick and ailing countryside we have lately had at Whitehall Place a medical man who, in a

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difficult situation in the House of Commons, made an excellent beginning in more than one direction. May we not now look for even greater results from the knowledge and skill of a Minister who commands majorities and is a doctor thrice over and an M.C.? If we write with some feeling it is perhaps because day by day, we have present to our eyes two views of agriculture. From the editorial eyrie in THE COUNTRYMAN office we look down into three farmyards. That is our short view of agricultural life and its problems. But there is also the long view. When we raise our eyes we gaze into three or four counties, while half a mile up the road yet another county unfolds itself. Our wide prospects tell us that agriculture is a question of more than the daily problems of our hamlet of Idbury and its like. It is a question of the welfare of England – and, as the Government Oversea Wireless Station at Leafield looms up in the south, we are reminded, of the world.

ø

As It Seems to Some of Us

To be a Seeker is to be the next best Sect to a Finder, and such an one shall every faithful humble Seeker be at the end. Happy Seeker, Happy Finder!— *Cromwell*

The Living on Rice Fallacy

IF the admirable and stimulating Mr. St. John Ervine will take the world for his parish he must expect to stumble now and then. He says that 'a Japanese labourer can live on a few fistfuls of rice' and speaks of 'a reduction of diet to a strictly farinaceous basis'. As he thus gives his influential

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countenance to a common Western fallacy, it is well to explain that neither the Japanese labourer nor anyone else can live on starch. Along with his rice – perfectly cooked by the way – the Japanese wisely takes a fermented pickle. He also eats, along with the rice and pickle, a little fish. Further, he is a consumer of bean curd, a useful and highly nitrogenous product, which we should have in this country if we had more sense. And he keeps washing the meal down with tea, which, because it is not made with boiling water, and is unsugared and without milk, may be drunk in quantities. Further, he ministers, as occasion serves, to a sweet tooth.

Stains on Silk

ONE of the most pitiful things we saw in Japan was the conditions in which many of the quite young peasant girls in the silk factories were working. It was enough to give anyone a dislike of silk for life. We now receive from Japan sad accounts of the financial losses a large number of these farmers' daughters have suffered as a result of a fall in prices which has also crippled their fathers as producers of cocoons. According to Japanese Home Office investigations, operatives are unpaid to the amount of between £500,000 and £1,000,000. Girls who were expecting to return home from the factory compounds with a year's money, received a few shillings only. No wonder the girls called the payment 'tear money'. Some orphan girls who had allowed their earnings to accumulate for several years lost everything. It

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may well be said that 'an end has come to the patriarchal system in industry'. With news like this, it is easy to understand that the army, largely composed as it is of country youths, may become, in alliance with the farmers, in a country so agricultural as Japan, a formidable force.

Coming out of the Army

READERS who are consulted as to the advisability of young men who cannot get a living in their villages joining the Army will be interested to know what opportunities there are now of learning a trade while serving in the ranks. We hear enthusiastic accounts of the fine work being done at the vocational training centre at Thornhill, Aldershot, under an admirable commandant, Major D. A. Hurst. Training in almost every trade is available and there is a serviceable monthly magazine. Training is carried on at two other centres besides Aldershot. Privates pay 5s. a week and other grades more. Alas, not more than ten per cent of the troops take the training.

A Barn Theatre

IN pre-War days, when the Editor of THE COUNTRYMAN lived in Essex, he had the satisfaction of presenting Barrie, Synge and a new Essex play, 'The Furriner', by S. L. Bensusan, in a great barn generously placed at his disposal by the Countess of Warwick. As people were then taking to motors, there was no difficulty in selling the more highly-priced seats, and the rest of the house used to be filled to capacity. Indeed the *Times* had a leader

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on the enterprise. Now, we are glad to learn, a series of Essex plays is being produced at this Barn Theatre at Easton. 'The Furriner' has again made his bow, this time in company with 'Old Cottage Tales' and 'The Diddycoy' of H. Cranmer Byng, and 'Joshua' (Bensusan) and 'The Queen's Ring' (Cranmer Byng) are in preparation. The example of Essex in providing, not only in a barn theatre, but, from time to time, for urban audiences, plays of the county might well be imitated. Essex has a character of its own, but is there a county without one? The organizers of the barn theatre lay stress on 'the tuneful slightly questioning uprise of the dialect and pristine delicious humour'. 'That's a lazy owd wind that 'ont trouble ter goo round ye, that goos right through ye', is the kind of thing. But other counties have such hinterland treasure also, and it becomes them to look to its preservation.

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MANY a kind-hearted soldier must have wondered what has happened to the thousands of Army horses which were sold by the Government when the troops came home from Egypt in 1918. The plight of these horses which bear the brand of the British Army, and are all over 22 years of age, is wretched beyond belief, for most of them now belong to very poor men. No wonder a committee of Britons has been formed in Cairo to buy the ill-used animals and put most of them out of their misery. Already 1200 have been purchased. The photographs in the leaflet of the 'Old War Horse Fund' (Lloyd's Bank, Fleet, Hants) are distressing.

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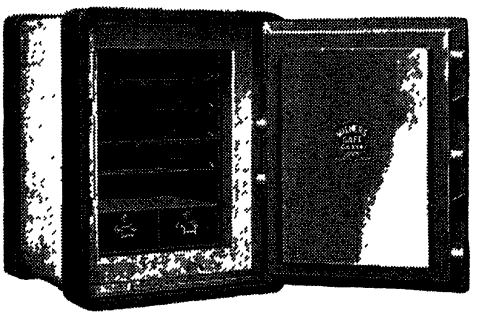
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EPISTLES FROM AN OLD HOMESTEAD

13. *COUNTY MAGAZINES, A WARNING AND AN OFFER*

ON the basis of a journalistic experience which probably exceeds that of any of my readers, and a rural experience extending over a longer period, may I offer a word of friendly advice to well-wishers of the countryside who are taken with the notion of running a county magazine? It is gladdening when devotion to rural welfare is strong enough to induce thoughts of county journalism. But would-be executants need to be careful. Starting a county magazine is no new thing. It has been done again and again. The shires are strewn with the dead – and dying. It is so easy to start. A few local patriots feel this, that and the other in the county to be 'worthy of permanent record'. And then there are the photographs that could be obtained, and the social workers, the antiquaries, the naturalists, the garden lovers, and the parsons with interesting churches, who would all be willing to write, and the magnates, the M.P.s and the bishop who would say kind words. As most men and women feel that if they had only the chance they could show editors a thing or two, an editor for a county magazine is seldom to seek. Nor are the local printers backward in providing estimates. Then it is believed that some local firms will advertise. And are not editor and contributors to work for nothing? It is possible – on paper – to show that the enterprise is going to pay its way, and the start is made. The local papers give a courteous notice, with the editor's photograph, a few good

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fellows are enthusiastic, a certain number of people pay their subscriptions promptly, and quite a number of others forget to do so.

AFTER a time, apart from the difficulty of providing the printer's monthly cheque, the editor finds himself with a tougher job than he had bargained for. He faces it gallantly – few of his friends in the least understand the fagging time he has let himself in for – but finally he gives up. What he has been through, poor man! Most of his contributors were far too long, most of them were unprepared to be cut, and not one of them was prepared to be declined. How does it happen that the best intentioned, the most charming people so often write the worst articles, that the people who know all about a thing cannot write and – it has been said so often – that people who can write pleasantly so seldom know? If the editor does not retire in a state of depression it may be that he is politely deposed. It may be felt that he is lop-sided on 'Nature', on the ecclesiastical, on the antiquarian, on the social side or on good causes. Readers who are for enlivening the villages may not care for ornithology, and the ornithologically- and horticulturally-minded may have their fill of architecture. Most of the contributors have done their best, some of them have even accepted criticism. But an editor cannot blue-pencil effectively – 99 out of 100 MSS. need pruning somewhere – cannot have any real control over his writers unless he can pay them. Nor, unless the editor is a man of elegant leisure, can he for long, in the economic conditions of the day, go on, if he has a journalistic

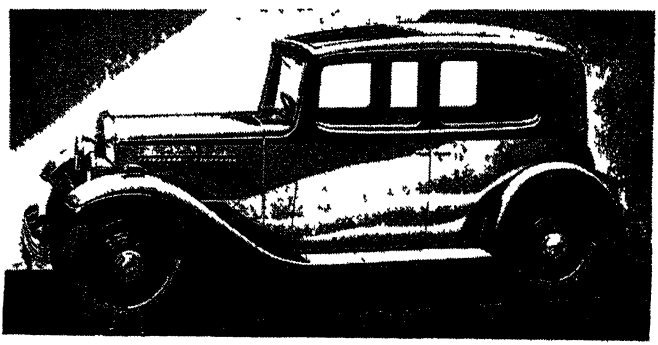
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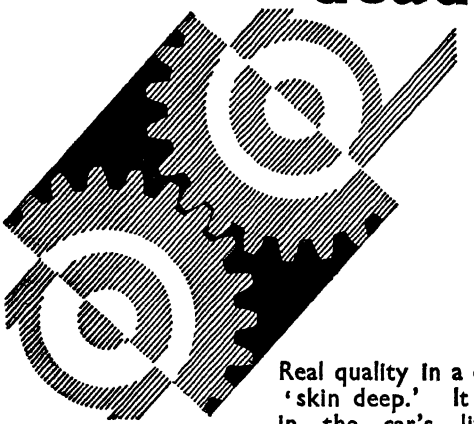
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gift, editing for nothing; and he is harassed by a stream of suggestions from the well-meaning concerning improvements which he is to make without money. Gallant though his effort may be, the national magazine will always contain work that he envies but cannot have, for first-class contributors have to be paid. Alas, the local advertisements, at the price at which they had to be taken, have not been such a stand-by after all. Another worry to the conscientious amateur editor is that his magazine looks different from the productions of professionals. His printer lets him down with a common range of types, poor standards in the arrangement and titling of articles, weak setting of the advertisements, an out-of-date, floppy page, silly shiny paper and an aggravatingly wired cover. The production is lucky if it is as good as third rate. The newsagents do not take to it, and the awkward size frays tidy housewives' tempers. It is a miracle if the publication does not run into grievous debt.

YET, though local patriotism may conceivably be overdone – for some of it is of the gig age, in a time when motors, not to speak of wireless, have made short work of county boundaries – it is a help and encouragement to the work of rural progress in a county for it to be chronicled. But in starting our county magazine let us be practical. First, most of us are too busy to read all the printed matter we get already and are therefore somewhat disinclined to pay for more. In the second place, all the probabilities are against its being possible to produce a magazine of pith and mettle twelve

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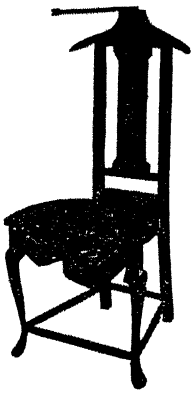
times a year which will be up to a reasonably appetising level. Thirdly, in the long run, no periodical can do good work if it is not self-respecting enough to pay its way. The periodical which is run as a rich man's hobby, is subventioned in some other fashion or seeks, for nothing, good writing from people who have to work for their living, does not breathe the air native to sound journalism. The conception of a non-profit-earning magazine is wrong. A good thing is worth its price.

I SHOULD like to see every Rural Community Council earning money out of a periodical. Until R.C.C.s have a revenue apart from subscriptions they are crippled. But if they try to add to their subscriptions by getting up a bazaar or a pageant they are in conflict with the cash-collecting of constituent societies. Thus the plan of earning a little money from a periodical which should be a record of their societies' work is attractive. How to set about it? A Council which lately went into consultation with the Editor of THE COUNTRYMAN took a wise step. If the problems of rural journalism have been studied anywhere it is at Idbury. The Editor, who would not have started THE COUNTRYMAN if he were not a fervent believer in the possibilities of rural journalism, suggested to the Council the plan of the supplement. He would meet the cost of a local supplement, and supply it in THE COUNTRYMAN for the particular county at a price to the Council which would enable it to drop a substantial sum into its till for every copy sold. In addition to this income, the Council would have the revenue from the advertisements is obtained for

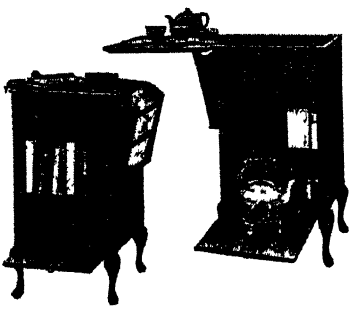
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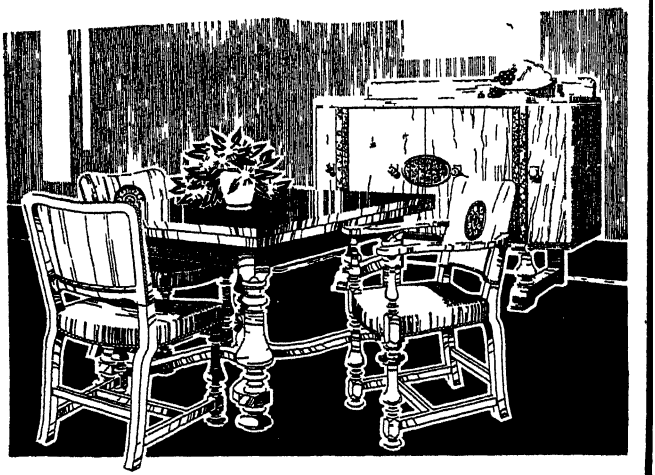
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its supplement. This plan has the obvious advantage that there is no expenditure by the Council; the risks are taken by THE COUNTRYMAN. The plan also offers to those who are asked to subscribe for copies something they are likely to care for: not a monthly which comes too frequently to be read, but a quarterly, and not a new, untried, amateur publication, but a successful magazine which has a wide range of interest and is of national repute. In every county there are people who have not yet encountered THE COUNTRYMAN but would like it, and like it none the worse because, in the copies sold in their county, it had some local matter. Suppose the Council offered to all subscribers of a guinea the opportunity not only of supporting its work but of receiving a copy of THE COUNTRYMAN with local matter in it: plainly an attractive proposition! This is the way in which R.C.C.s can help to cover a considerable proportion of their expenses, and make it possible to pay their secretaries a better salary. It is now often too small to retain for long an ardent and efficient man.

THERE is another matter, put into my head by the receipt of a specimen copy of a new and pleasantly produced quarterly, 'The Tree Lover', a 16-page periodical with two plates—and no advertising. Surely in such a case as this, something might be done in the way of association or co-operation, as I have ventured to suggest to the R.C.C.s? I always remember that before THE COUNTRYMAN was established, two other 'Countrymans' had lived—a few months. Our Editor had never even heard of them!
— *Solomon Wiseacre*

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Other People's Letters

'*A HEAVEN on Earth?*' William Morris was one of the men to whom mountainous country did not appeal. He liked a country to be 'open' with 'some central and distinguishing natural feature of hill or river'. He wrote, 'I was always a lover of the sad lowland country'. He loved 'the poplar meadows of the little villages of the water about the Somme', which makes one think that he would have shared Constable's enthusiasm for the valley of the Stour. With this I myself can quite sympathize; but what I cannot sympathize with is his characterization of Kelmscott as 'a heaven on earth'. I doubt if there is a finer view in England than that from Symonds Yat. – *Francis S. Darwin*

'*THE Missing William*' after whom your H.H.S. makes enquiry, is on my bookshelves, 'The Little Woodman and His Dog Cæsar' by Mrs. Sherwood, the author of the famous Fairchild Family, and was published many years ago by Routledge. If H.H.S. cares to send me an address, I will lend him my copy with great pleasure, for the use of his grandson. – *E. M. Delafield*

[No fewer than eleven subscribers have been kind enough to send the needed information, and two, like the author of the 'Diary of a Provincial Lady', have been good enough to offer to lend the book. – *Editor*]

AN Open Air Museum. Some years ago you suggested a National Open Air Museum representative of old country life. It would be a pity if this idea should be allowed to drop. If I suggest Whipsnade I may be in danger of incurring the wrath of the Zoological Society, but surely twenty acres could be acquired as an annexe? It should be possible to reconstruct the different aspects of old country life from the seventeenth to the middle of the nineteenth century. There are derelict barns and timber houses to be had for the asking. There are perfect gems of Georgian architecture, threatened by the speculative builder, which could be taken down and rebuilt. I know of old farm waggons and carts, which would form the nucleus of a great collection. The open air museum should include specimens of windmills, dovecots, smithies, toll houses and village pumps, etc. – *A. E. Richardson, Professor of Architecture, London University*

'*LONDON versus the Country.*' I need both London and country environments, but always desire to spend at least two-thirds of my time in the country. Also I require at least a few weeks every year by the sea. – *Havelock Ellis*

Like the witty Frenchman, I look upon the country as a damp, chilly place where birds fly about

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RURAL Britain on our Stamps. I heartily agree with your plea that our postage stamps should somehow reflect England better than they do. – *Stephen Tallents*

THE 'Exmoor Prayer'. The last time I saw Thomas Hardy we discussed the following prayer which it was curious that he as a Wessex man had never heard:

God bless me and my wife,
My son Jan and *his* wife!
Us fŏwer,
No mŏwer!

I have been told that there is a Lowland Scots version, yet pawkier. Can any north-countryman supply a copy? – *E.R.*

HOMECROFT Accountancy. Put aside what I earn in my working hours, I have some two hours left in which I can't earn, and wouldn't be earning anyhow. Now to put them in in the garden, and get potatoes out of them, and save myself buying potatoes, pays me – it makes me better off – as long as I can cover manures, seed, rent, and the extra wear and tear of shoe-leather, with the price of the potatoes. In the Homecroft accountancy labour is free. It is spare-time labour. That is why it does not break down in a community. And of course if the family swelled to a few hundred, and one person cooked for the family, and one baked for it, and one mended boots for it, and one pressed clothes, and a dozen grew the potatoes, etc., for the family, and some more did the family sewing on a sewing machine, and the darning on a darning machine, and the knitting on a knitting machine, and so on *ad infinitum*, all in spare time, see what a well-off family it would be even if they had only a 15*s.*-a-week-dole, each, coming in. – *J. W. Scott, Hon. Sec. National Homecroft Association*

Following what you say, may I stress the fact that agricultural produce such as bacon, vegetables, chickens, eggs, etc., cannot stand three profits and three sets of expenses, the producer's, the dealer's and the retailer's. The industrial worker should produce these for his own use in his leisure time, which is tending to increase with the efficiency of the machine. Industries should be scattered through rural areas. Motor transport makes this quite feasible. Workers should be grouped round factories, and leave the land needed for their own domestic production, having a ploughed area divided among them annually. – *F. A. Macquisten*, (*M.P. for Argyll*)

'BASKET'. Mrs. Joseph Wright thinks that the word 'basket', given by a correspondent as a dialect word in a recent COUNTRYMAN to mean a child born out of wedlock, is more likely to be simply a peasant rendering of the word 'bastard'. – *E.*

Pure Benevolence

THAT advertisers have a kindness for THE COUNTRYMAN we knew, but this past quarter some of them have taken to recognizing our high merits in a new and elegant way. Scrubb's, the cloudy ammonia people, sent us a box of two varieties of scented ammonia for the bath, besides a bottle of the old cloudy and some special soaps. Invigorated, we proceeded to try a new spade from the Hardy Pick Co., of Sheffield, the balance of which is delightful. Next we heard great praise of the new Lewis Humane Snare for rabbits of which the R.S.P.C.A. had sent us a sample. Consciences can be salved for two shillings. A 'Gripper' trap for rats and mice is blessed by Major van der Byl and kills without misery. Next we went to see what could be done in contriving plant protectors and improving the lighting of poultry houses with the aid of a roll of Windolite, the substitute for glass that is well worth experimenting with. It was with a right hand nipped in two places by old-fashioned secateurs, which we were loath to discard, that we felt thankfulness for a Rolcut, which cuts perfectly with a minimum of effort and with a catch that does not get in the way. Returning indoors, we adorned the fireside with an extraordinarily efficient fire tongs (from Messrs. Accles and Pollock, of Birmingham), which are entirely different from every other fire tongs, in that the two sections don't pivot on one another in the ordinary fashion, but work a sure grip at right angles to the motion of the handles. 'Chemico', a bath cleanser from the County Chemical Co., yet another Birmingham firm, not only does its job, we are informed by the department concerned, but gratifies the housemaid by reason of its pleasant odour. 'Sani-Sol', a grease solvent and water softener from London, is also in favour. No offering we have received has brought us wider domestic popularity, however, than a package from Cadbury's, in which Birmingham commercial generosity is crowned by the new Bournvita, a packet of the famous Regent chocolates, besides half a dozen boxes of varieties of the new Chosen chocolates. In our opinion trade is reviving, at any rate in Birmingham.

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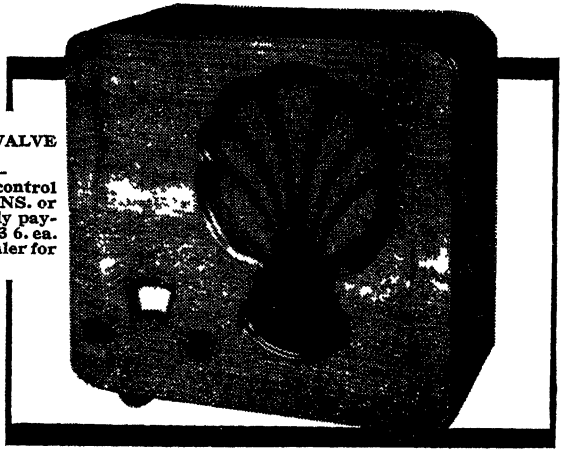
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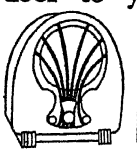
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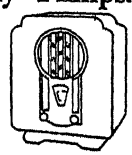


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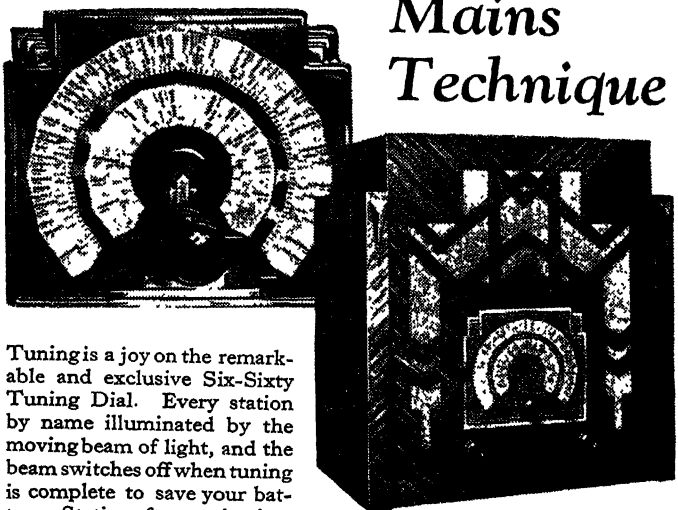
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Tuning is a joy on the remarkable and exclusive Six-Sixty Tuning Dial. Every station by name illuminated by the moving beam of light, and the beam switches off when tuning is complete to save your battery. Station after station in a moment. No groping, delay, or difficulty. Clean cut separation

Insist on seeing this modern receiver before buying radio. The famous Six-Sixty Chassiset with its 'Pre-Selector' bandpass tuning, and modern valves has unusual power, range and selectivity. Built-in moving-coil speaker. Handsome figured walnut cabinet.

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Six-Sixty Valve Service Stations have been established to provide, to ALL RADIO LISTENERS, honest and competent technical assistance on all radio problems —free and without obligation. Write for the address of the nearest.

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SIX-SIXTY RADIO CO., Ltd. *Makers of the famous Six-Sixty (B.V.A.) Valves*
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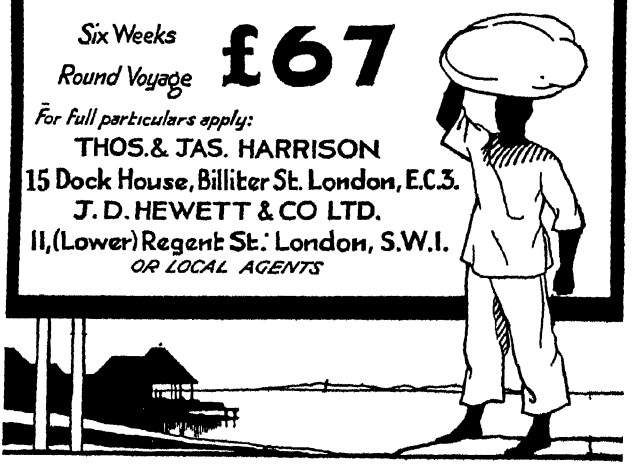
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HARRISON LINE

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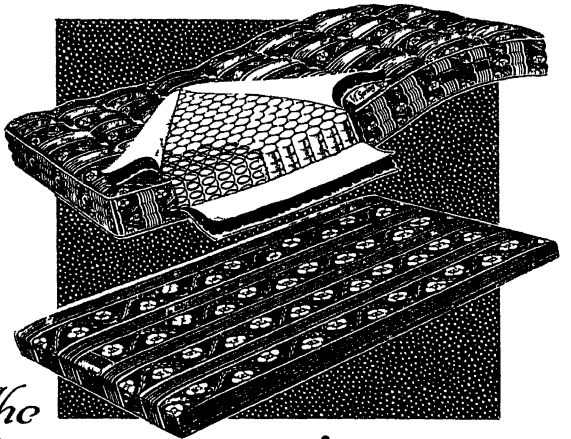
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15 Dock House, Billiter St. London, E.C.3.
J. D. HEWETT & CO LTD.
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LUXURIOUSLY RESTFUL



The

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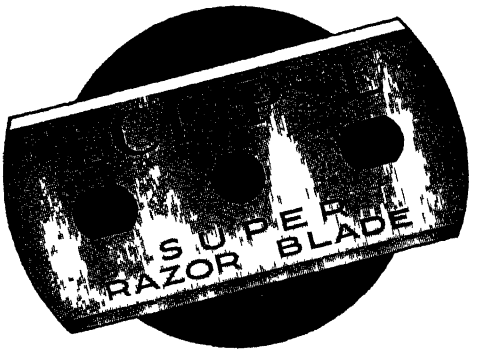
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You'll hardly believe you are shaving



Not even the stiffest of beards can retard the smooth progress of an "Eclipse" Blade.

3 for 1/-

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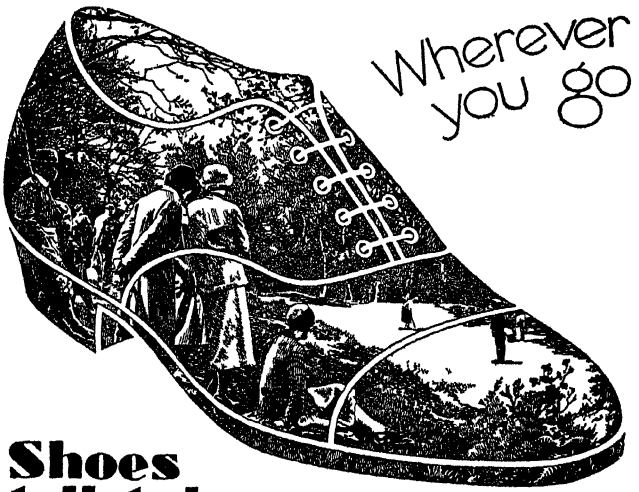
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Obtainable from usual suppliers

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Shoes tell tales

SOME shoes go through life looking very dull and worn Hard-worked and neglected, by their very looks they plainly say, 'I didn't get my 'Nugget' shine this morning'

Others there are that tell a different tale After a good day's work they still look bright and fresh, for 'Nugget gives a polish that lasts

NUGGET
BOOT POLISH

Black, Tan, Dark Brown and other shades — in Tins

3d. and 6d.

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THE RADIANCE OF THE SUN IN THE HOME

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THE HIGHEST RADIATION EFFICIENCY OF ANY ELECTRIC FIRE

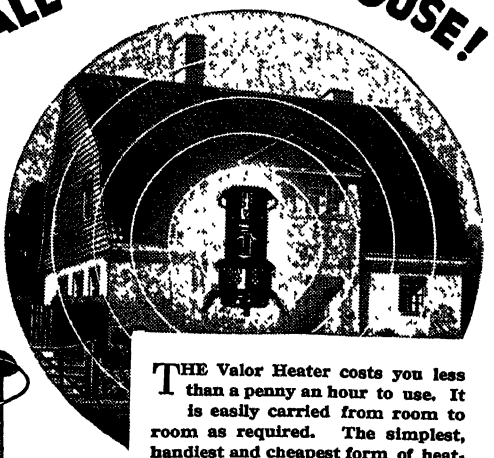
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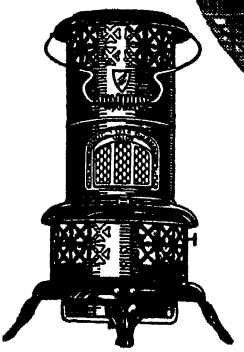
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he said—'we feel our case has

COSY WARMTH ALL OVER THE HOUSE!



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THE Valor Heater costs you less than a penny an hour to use. It is easily carried from room to room as required. The simplest, handiest and cheapest form of heating you can possibly buy. Burns for hours without attention, and lasts for years without any expense beyond, oil and wick. No smoke, no smell, no trouble. *Over two millions sold.* Buy yours from your ironmonger or stores to-day. *But make sure you get the genuine British-made Valor, and so avoid paying tax on imported articles*

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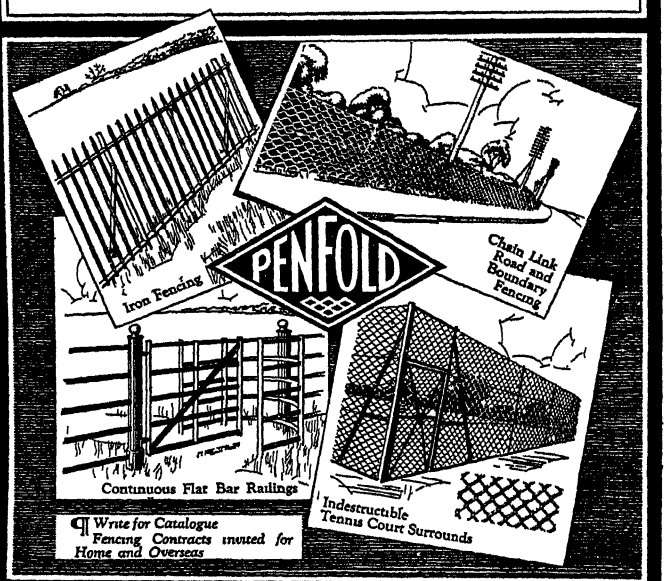
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ANGLO-AMERICAN OIL CO. LTD., 85 Albert Embankment, Vauxhall, London, S.E.11

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D.A.186

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Fencing Contracts invited for Home and Overseas

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LIMITED
IMPERIAL WORKS WATFORD
The Largest Makers of Chain Link fencing in the World

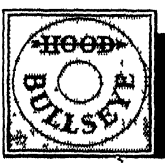


Here are the boots that will take you through water and mud, over rough ground and rocks, and still they last, year in, year out. Made of specially toughened rubber and reinforced throughout. Absolutely resist the action of Petrol, Oil and Acids. Flexible and snug fitting

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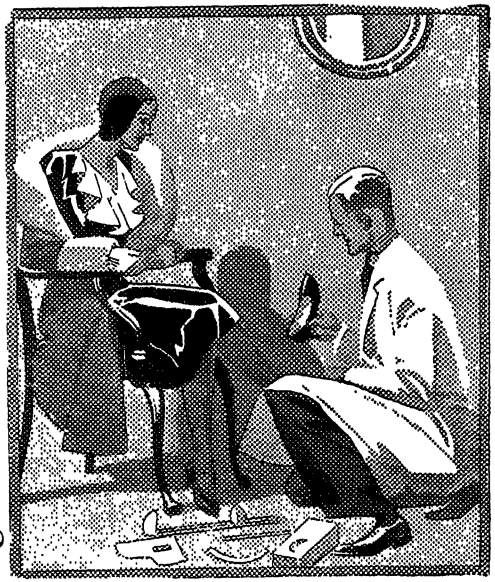
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Look for this label.



Wellingtons—Men's 19*s.* 11*d Womens and Boys'* 17*s.* 6*d Storm King (¾-thigh boot)* 27*s* 6*d Hip Boots* 32*s Sold by all Boot Shops and Rubber Stores. (If any difficulty, write for illustrated catalogue and name of nearest Stockist)*

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What is the FOOT TEST?

The Foot Test is the very comfortable, pleasant way in which one of Dr. Scholl's Qualified Foot Experts discovers why your feet do not serve you as they should.

In a few moments, in a private cubicle, you learn why your feet hurt and how your foot trouble — no matter what it may be — is corrected by the Dr. Scholl method.

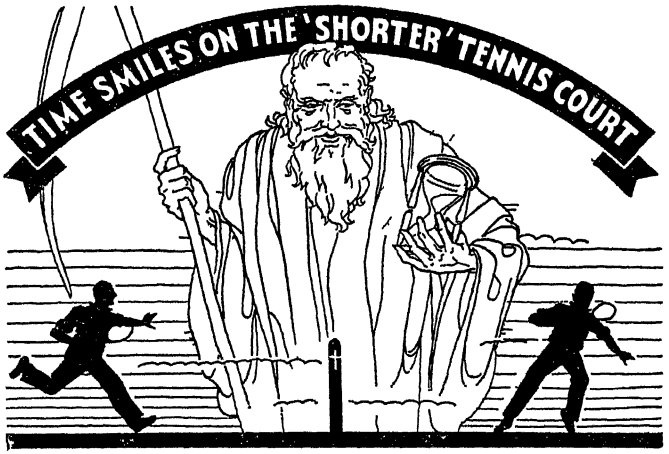
There is no charge and no obligation attached to this service. Should you care to adopt the Foot Expert's advice, the cost of lasting foot comfort is very little. Quite near to where you live is a Depot for Dr. Scholl's Foot Comfort Service. If you do not know the address, write to Dr. Scholl's Foot Comfort Service, 93 Regent Street, London, W.1. A booklet by Dr. Scholl on 'The Care of The Feet' will also come to you

WRITE TO-DAY!

Dr Scholl's
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Typographical Experts give us high praise



The Rat—

DESTRUCTION INCARNATE—
CARRIER of DISEASE

In drain, and fœtid sewer ; in garbage heap and foulness, rats run and breed. Their bodies are thick with disease germs. They contaminate everything they touch.

To wipe out RATS and MICE put down

LIVERPOOL VIRUS REGD

It is safe because it is not a poison. It cannot harm food but is fatal to Rats and Mice. One taste of the Virus and the pests are stricken with a death-dealing micro-organism which is painless in action. The effect is carried to other rodents ; and many are exterminated with one baiting.

SAFE



Death to rats and mice, harmless to humans, all domestic animals, poultry and wild birds.

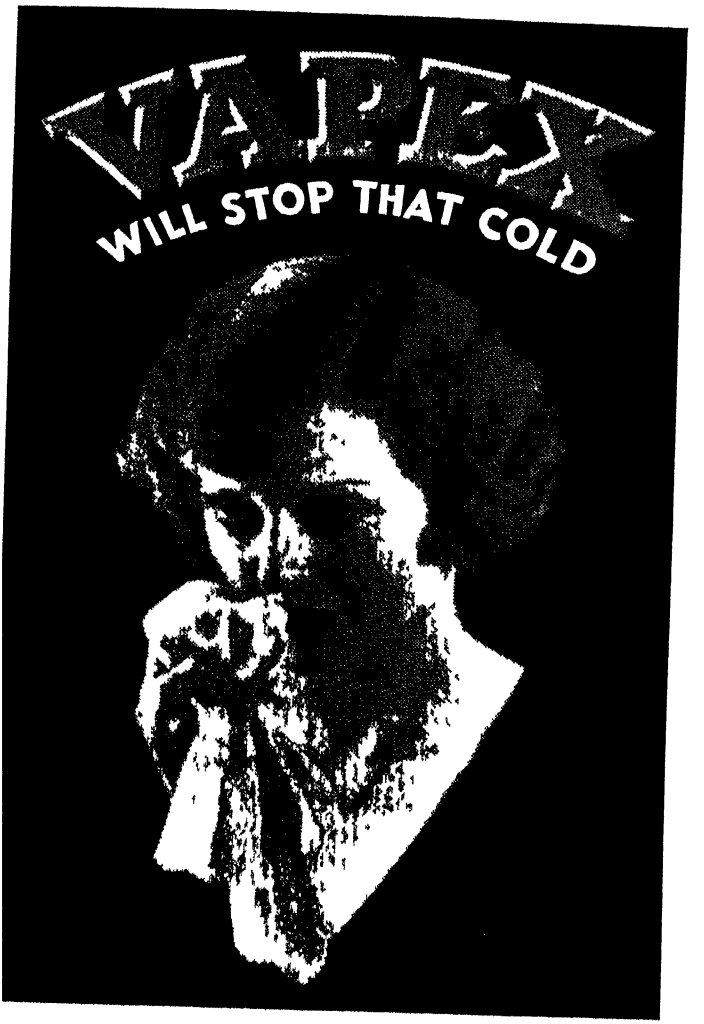
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Virus in tins for rats 2/6 and 6/-.

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WILL STOP THAT COLD

Worms in Dogs



Dogs of all ages and Breeds are subject to worms.

They are a fertile source of disease in the Dog and should have immediate treatment.

NALDIRE'S
WORM POWDERS

Safely remove these pests within one hour, at the same time giving tone to the stomach, and producing first-rate condition in dogs.

WORMS IN A FOX-TERRIER

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Please send me one of Naldire's Worm Powders. I consider them splendid I had a Fox-Terrier almost dead last Sunday, and got one of your Powders from a friend, and in fifteen minutes after the dog had it, she passed a tapeworm almost 60 feet in length. Frank J. Brown.

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DOG SOAP

Guaranteed free from Carbolic Acid and all other poisons

A weekly wash with Naldire's Dog Soap will destroy all Irritating Insects, remove Doggy Smell, improve the Coat, and leave the animal Refreshed and Happy

Tablets, 8d. and 1s. 4d. of Chemists and Stores.

If unable to obtain either of above send P.O. to

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(Flynn's)

It is naturally of Interest to them a

Back to the Land

A way out for Workless Youths



Stock Raising!

A most serious aspect of stagnation in industry is the enforced idleness of the young man.

Whilst doing emergency relief work in South Wales during the crisis, the plight of the workless lad haunted the Salvation Army and led to the great solution of the 'House o' the Trees' in the Rhondda Valley.

A substantial farm house, with 42 acres of mountain-side land, was acquired. In seven months' time forty-two unemployed collier boys under competent instructors have worked wonders. Land has been cleared and drained, two acres of vegetables raised, and pigs and poultry are being reared.

Work on the land is supplemented by indoor occupations of boot repairing and carpentering; all with a view to equipping the lads with a calling. Every effort is made to find permanent employment when proficiency is achieved.

The success of House o' the Trees No. 1 has led to the opening of a second centre with larger accommodation some miles down the valley.

These promising adventures towards good citizenship are capable of expansion. Readers anxious for unemployed youths to be saved from despair or evil, and trained to be employable, can help in many ways. Loans of land for the duration of the depression, gifts of livestock, or the *means* to procure them will be gratefully received.

Further information gladly supplied. Address to:

GENERAL HIGGINS, 101 Queen Victoria St., London, E.C.4

THE SALVATION ARMY

they learn with whom they are dealing

'LITTLE PIECES'

THE Prince, in his famous Address to Youth, suggested that, though the unemployment problem might appear too hopeless to tackle, much might be done if people, willing to be good neighbours, would break it up into little pieces, and deal with one or two.

Unemployment is only one of many causes which are responsible for hundreds of children being thrown on to the hands of the Children's Aid Society, and because not many people could afford to come to the rescue and bear the whole cost of keeping a child in one of the seven Homes, a matter of some £40 a year, the Birthday League makes the problem quite simple by breaking the year up into 365 little pieces and inviting you and 364 others each to tackle one little piece by giving 2s. on your birthday.

Then the thing is done!

Probably most of the children would have been ragged, dirty, and playing in the street, had not the Children's Aid Society taken care of them, and provided not only food, clothing and a happy home, but also the training necessary to enable them to grow up self-respecting, self-supporting God-fearing men and women.

Birthday Leaguers are helping to give them a chance in life. The Society's address is Victoria House, 117 Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1

[*Advt*

You can rely on our Advertising, for



Will You Light a Candle?

The bitter winds of adversity have left many children in the darkness and the cold. During the year the new admissions to the **National Children's Home and Orphanage** have brought it to a total family of **3,914** boys and girls. Every day adds new names to the waiting list and we ask your help.

'All ye who Christians be,
Oh, light my tiny candle here
for me.
It has gone out; I am not very old,
And as I travelled in the cold
A bitter wind with all his might
Blew, and put out my little light.

'All ye who Christians be
Will ye not list to me.
Who have so often prayed
I might not be afraid?
I am a little frightened—can't
you see?
Oh, light my little candle here
for me.'

Edna Norman (By permission).

Your Admission Gift of 5 Gns.

WILL REMOVE ONE NAME from a list of those now waiting assignment. If you wish, particulars of the child assigned will be forwarded to you. Please use the attached form.



My Candle

I enclose Five Guineas to light a candle for me by the admission of a child into the Children's Home.

Name

Address

(C.)

Principal: Rev. W. Hodson Smith. General Treasurers The Rt Hon Lord Wakefield of Hythe, C B E LL D, Sir Thomas Barlow Bart M D, F R S.

National Children's Home and Orphanage

(Founded by Dr. Stephenson)
30 Branches 4 000 Children
Chief Offices
Highbury Park, London, N.5

For GARDENS AND FARMS

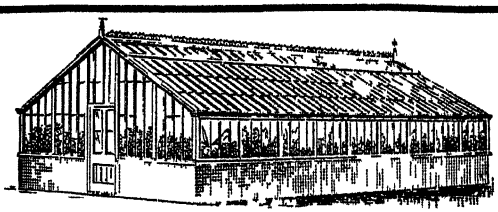
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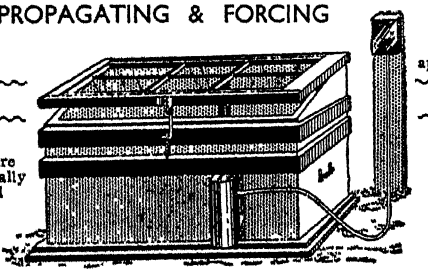
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Grass and Clover Specialists (A. G. LEIGHTON, LTD)

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FOR PROPAGATING & FORCING

(Patent applied for)

Temperature Automatically Maintained



Humidity Easily Varied

For raising seedlings, striking cuttings and forcing bulbs or plants.
Can be used in open or greenhouse. Practica land efficient.

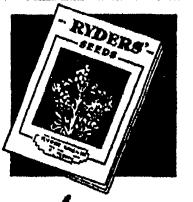
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FOR PLANT DISEASES

II

APPLE AND PEAR SCAB, RED SPIDER, ROSE MILDEW, BLACK-SPOT, RUST, etc

There is no method of treatment so effective, safe, convenient and inexpensive as wet spraying with sulphur or copper in colloidal suspension

SULSOL COLLOIDAL SULPHUR

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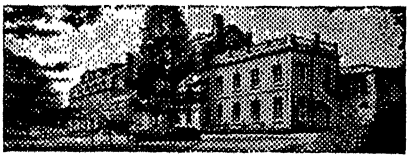
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Mr. Gladstone used to read American

A Booklet about this



which ALL who AIL should read

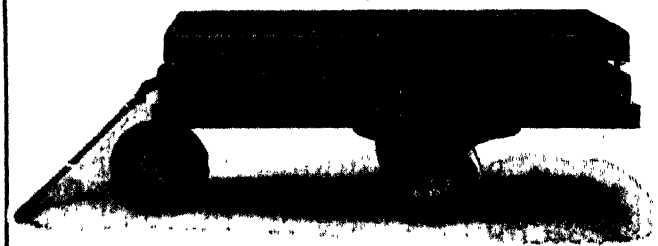
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HYDRO AND HEALTH HOME
Watford (*Telephone: Watford* 5252) Herts

Barnards Ltd. Norwich

NEW ARTICLE
Plant Barrow on Balloon Tyred Pneumatic Wheels

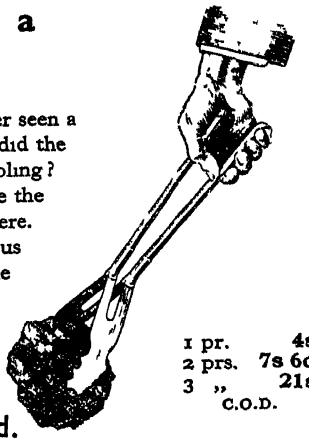


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DETACHABLE SIDES AND ENDS

6ft. Long, 2ft. 6in. Wide £8:15:0 Carr. Paid
Apply to your local ironmonger

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ARMITAGE'S No. 1—Original Dry Chick Food containing Dried Flies & Ants' Eggs—From Shell to One Month Old.
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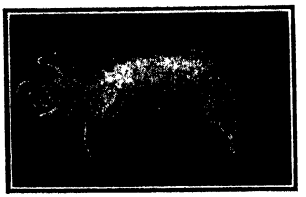
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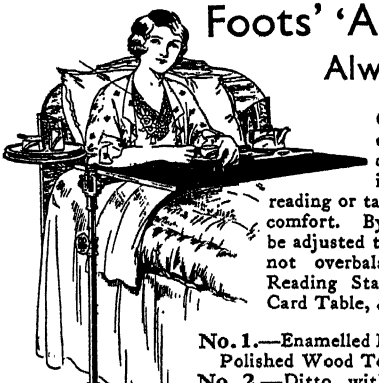
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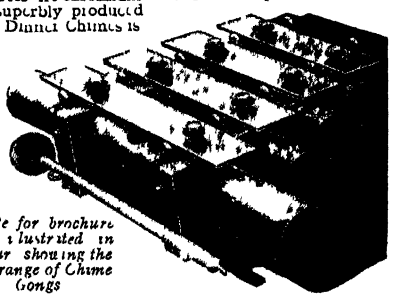
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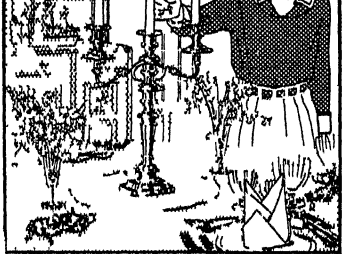


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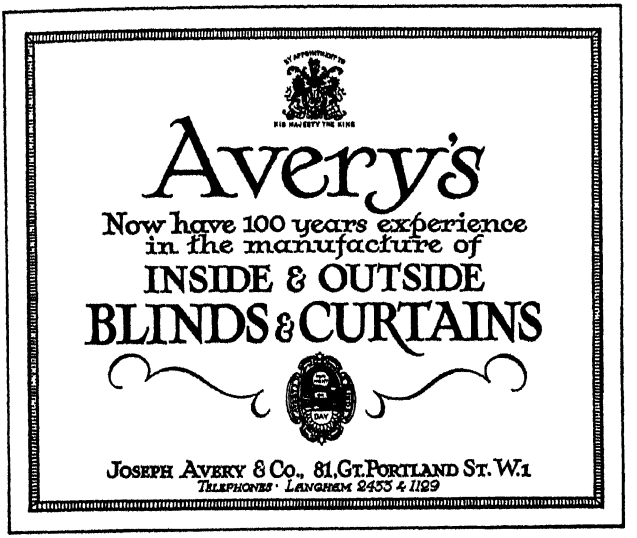
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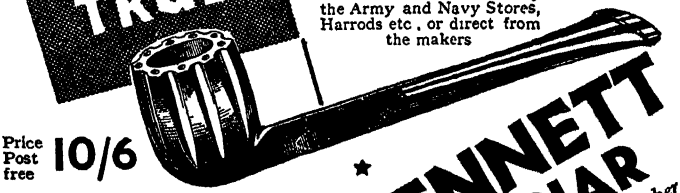

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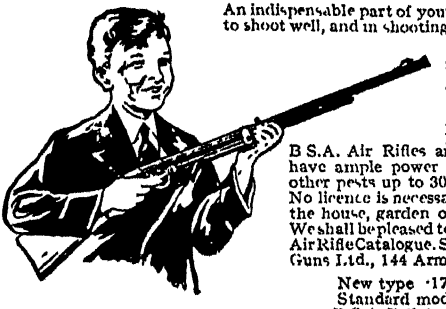
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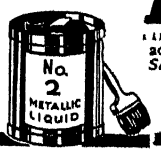
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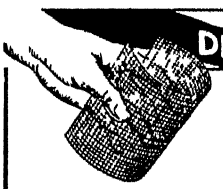
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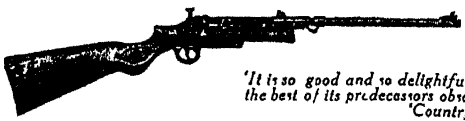
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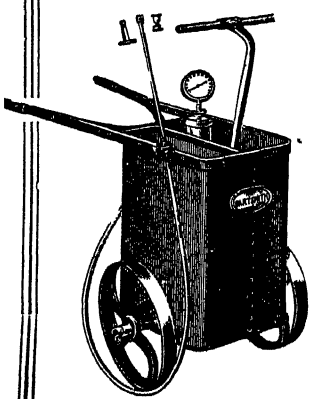
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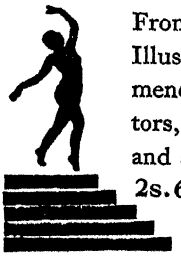
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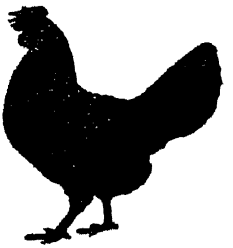
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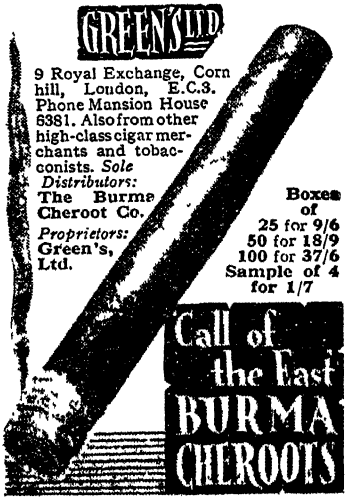
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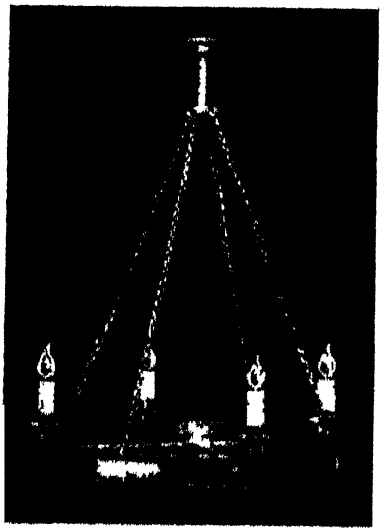
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